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CALMAR . . . Ia.

. . . Cradled by the Gods!

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1850-1950

A history of Calmar, Iowa, issued
on the 100th anniversary of the
first pioneer, Thore P. Skotland,
a Norseman.

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FORT DODGE & ALLEN CO., IOWA

Written for the

Calmar Commercial Club

June 1, 1950

by

John Clifford Eichorn, Ph.D.

Minister, pro tem, to
Waucoma Federated Church

Owner - Exhibitor - Calmar Theater

Reading Time: 1 hour and 47 minutes

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1850-1950....Written for the
Calmar Commercial Club, 1950.

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The Great Governor of a Great State, WILLIAM S. BEARDSLEY

Centennial Program

You are cordially invited to attend the following events, marking the centennial celebration of Calmar:

June 1st - Governor's Day, in honor of Governor William S. Beardsley.

12:30 - His reception.

1:30 - The parade led by the Governor, featuring county bands, kiddies, pets, Calmar business men floats.

2:30 - The burial of the Calmar Capsule.
The Governor's address.

8:00 - The pageant with scenes depicting Calmar's history. Out-of-doors, on the school lawn.

July—during this month several entertainment events will be offered. Watch your newspapers. Also the "Calmar" Kangaroo Court" will continue its fun and festivities. See you in jail!

August 23 Farmers' Day.

A day set aside for the farmer and family in recognition of his great contribution to American society. Free acts, magicians, concessions, and rides.

Time - 1:00 P. M. To Midnight. Marlo's Amusements will present Marlo, the Mighty Magician.

Dedicated to . . .

*All classes, creeds, and colors
composing Calmar, whose courage,
conviction, and simple Spirit
have held high the flag of our
pioneers on a stormy and
a sunny ridge.*

The Introduction

by Felix Hennessy, M.D.

The purpose of this volume is to portray the growth and development of this community during the past century.

Here are recorded, for future generations to read and study, the adversities, the joys, and the achievements of our pioneer families. We recognize an inestimable debt to those early settlers who carved a fertile and productive area out of a paradise of primeval beauty.

Strong in purpose, the rugged people who settled this area were endowed with firm moral, mental, and spiritual qualities. These virtues formed a solid foundation upon which those who followed erected a well-proportioned and culturally mature social structure.

It is our fervent hope that the coming century will see continued growth in peaceful and tolerant living among our citizens. We trust that this community will always be inhabited, as it is today, by people who are as interested in making a life as they are in making a living.

To Dr. John Eichorn and his good wife Mary Elizabeth, who devoted much of their time and energy in compiling and editing this book, I express my deep gratitude. And to my many friends and neighbors I express the wish that this volume will give them, as it has given me, a full measure of pleasure, satisfaction, and inspiration.

The Acknowledgement

by The Author

"No man lives unto himself" is never more true than when referring to the time an author puts into writing a book. Take a quart of blood, a pint of ink, a thousand reams of paper, and the good will and advice of a hundred well-meaning souls; stir them together; and presto, you have the history of Calmar.

Undoubtedly many names and facts have been omitted unintentionally in this history, and to such we deeply apologize. Nevertheless, many people deserve much credit for their hard work and fairness in helping the author. They supplied facts, towels for tears, and patience with his temperament and idiosyncrasies.

To the following go our humble thanks for magnificent cooperation without which the Calmar history would remain written in flowing water:

The Commercial Club and their progressive presidents, Ken Meyers and Harry Shipton, who gave selflessly to make this book possible.

A splendid committee whose names you can read in the back of this book.

George Brueckner, who did so much to take the burden off my shoulders and give me time to write.

Dr. Hennessey, whose patience, wisdom, and counsel was welcomed in no small way.

Margaret Balik, whose supplemental research, review, and proof reading were indispensable.

Fred and Verna Meyer, who talked out of their hearts and gave such real insight into Calmar life behind the scenes.

Ruth Rickert, who is a good librarian, always and ever cooperating.

Dr. and Mrs. F. Conover, who supplied invaluable old newspapers and scrap books. Mrs. Conover, a grand person, is a gold mine of information.

Rev. T. L. Rosholt, who knows more about Thor P. Skotland than any man now living and whose gentle manners I appreciate.

Tony Vondersitt, who can spin a Calmarian tale with the same genius that he can spin an intricate design on his lathe.

Emma S. Olson, whose intimate and scholarly knowledge of the town is the real proof of her affection for Calmar life.

Mrs. Frank Uher, who provided information and help. She consulted the author and made helpful suggestions.

Eline Sandager, who faithfully provided pictures and tid-bits which are found in this volume.

Jean Conover, whose artistry and skill helped to reveal the unknown past.

Frank Pletka, Carl Meyer, Edwin Peterson, Gus Anderson, Joe Koch and Louis Wangsness—all old in years but young in their hopes for Calmar.

Roman Rausch—who has never counted the number of hairs he cut or the days he loves to spend on Calmar lore.

My appreciation also to the following who have helped in some measure: Mr. and Mrs. Idor Bjonerud, Mr. and Mrs. Francis Meyer, George Bucheit, Frank and Wm. Bily, Dan Novak, Judge T. H. Goheen, Attorney J. W. Neuzil, Dr. C. K. Peck, Ed Luzum, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Grundeland, Mollie Severson, Ross Luzum, John Kubesh, Mrs. Ralph Weselmann, Mrs. J. C. Iverson, Supt. J. C. Iverson, Dena Winger, Mrs. Harry Shipton, Adrian Smith, Tony Huber, Frank Frana, and Sheriff George Harms.

Finally, orchids to my rewrite and recast victims who were Mary Elizabeth Eichorn, Melissa B. Lea, Marcia Drake, Marion Snyder, Darlys Diekmann and her typing classes.

The Author's Foreword

The Calmar Theatre
Calmar, Iowa
June 1, 1950

Mr. Otto Rob Landelius
An Author
Grabo, Sweden

Dear Mr. Landelius:

It was a pleasure to learn through the media of **The Decorah Journal** and **The Decorah Public Opinion** (two of Iowa's finest papers) that you are writing a book about towns in the United States named from Swedish sources. So you desired the history of Calmar, Iowa, particularly the Swedish background.

This book, in preparation before your letter arrived, will help answer your questions. It is neither complete in its contents nor exhaustive in its scope. Unfortunately the Swedes played only a small part in Calmar.

Frankly, this book is being written for all who are concerned about Calmar, its past, present and future. Truth is paramount in our search to piece together the great gaps in Calmar history. As you realize, most history is a matter of interpreting the facts. Facts have an elusive quality. For example, in the United States, if you live in the South the war between the states (1860-1865) is given a treatment different from that which is taught in the North. Again, our history books say little about our unfair treatment of the Indians, our invasion of Canada with annexation purposes, or our steel lathes sold to the Japanese Empire.

Make no mistake, however, because the United States is a great and wonderful country; and her greatness is primarily in the small towns like Calmar. Composing over 40% of our total population, these small towns of 2,500 and less possess workable democratic processes. We do not think of ourselves as Swedes (5%), Norwegians (40%), Bohemians (35%), Swiss (3%), Germans (10%), English and French etc. (7%), but as Americans.

Calmar is a typical melting pot with excellent schools, well attended churches, and often spirited elections. Our censor-free radios, newspapers, and movies, plus freedom of movement keep individuals well exposed to world events. Business is comparatively free, although heavily taxed by the Government. The stores are modern, well filled, and most articles can be purchased at rather reasonable costs. Per example, large eggs now are 37¢; top grade steak around 50 cents.

Iowa is the wealthiest state in the Union on a per capita basis, but her wealth is not flamboyant or dramatic. Calmar is again representative. Neither extreme wealth nor poverty exists. Nearly all own autos, are well dressed, housed and fed. Witness, if you will, a man in frayed and besmirched overalls who enters the bank. Is he going to beg? No, he's buying one hundred dollar savings bonds for his grandchildren's Christmas. Wealth means little to these mid-westerners as far as externals are concerned.

In our search for facts, I have called your attention to factual interpretation, America's greatness revealed by the small towns, Calmar's melting pot, and natural wealth. Now a more personal word.

There is no justifiable reason for me to write this history, because I am an outsider. It has taken me hundreds of hours and much loss of working time as an exhibitor and minister, and also loss of sleep and recreation. This has been necessary, because through projection and imagination I have tried to re-live the dreams and hopes of the people who have made Calmar. Almost any native could have written this more quickly and easily.

Be assured that as a business man I have received no compensation for my work. As a minister I can think of none who have been particularly revolutionized by my efforts. As a human I probably have made some enemies by directly challenging the "Calm!" in Calmar.

Why then write the history? My family suggested that I possess a tapeworm which needs to be fed by such egotistical food. Others feel it is in keeping with a sense of conceit and self domination. Perhaps these friendly critics are right.

Frankly I have written, "Cradled By The Gods" for two reasons. One, for the people who really love Calmar. Two, for the convenience of having most of Calmar's lore in one volume.

There is a growing concern in Calmar, that since we symbolize so much of our country's greatness, we ought to be aware of the seeds of destruction which lie within us.

Our brains are helping to produce the H-T bomb, (soon outmoded) that guarantees rubble and ruin for more than a hundred square miles. Our liberty is often license to do what we selfishly want to do. Our fine churches are too often taken for granted and present a subtle temptation to make them reliable substitutes for our love of God. Our splendid schools are not always appreciated. Our people are sometimes afflicted with the dollar sign disease.

Yes, we are conscious of our sins, shortcomings, and mistakes. This book exemplifies all. Yet we are fearfully and wonderfully made; and if we can learn to love and share all that we have and are, it may be that our country's salvation is assured. This book may be a mirror in which Calmar really sees herself for the first time.

Calmar has a long way to go before she learns to give God and man their proper dues, but she has started to crawl from the "Cradle of the Gods". Soon she will walk and run.

Now read the story in fantasy and fact, and at your leisure write me.

Fraternally
for world peace,
John C. Eichorn

PART ONE

1850 to approximately 1875 . . . with some events modernized



*The Mills of the Gods
Grind Slowly
But Exceedingly Fine*

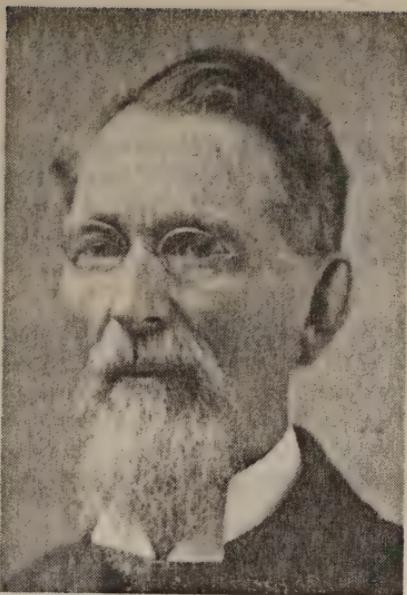


Chapters

- I THE MELTING POT
- II SON OF A BEAR HUNTER
- III HARVEST ON A RIDGE
AND IN A VALLEY



Ole Hougen and wife, early settlers



T. W. Hazelton, first roundhouse foreman



Endre P. Sandager, early settler



S. V. Potter, first passenger agent

CONVERSATION NUMBER ONE AT MID-NIGHT

Through long and sleepless nights, when the wind whistles softly through the windows of the Opera House, my thoughts go back to the work-a-day world of the men and women who built this town. Believe it or not, the best place to see such things is from the small platform near the large black letters CALMAR.

Climbing 106 steel rungs is not exactly fun; but the view is wonderful, and the wind is savagely and soothingly expressive. Here you can sit and allow your imagination to run wild. After what happened to me on top of that water tower, I am sure that even the most unimaginative peasant would be able to write a glowing account of the three spirits who nightly take up their vigil.

The first time I heard them conversing about Calmar I was so shocked that I clutched the rail to keep my balance. Then I questioned my sanity, but their information and knowledge was so exact and detailed that I knew instinctively who they were. I can repeat their conversation word for word . . .

"Think of all the changes I've seen in the 36,000 days I've watched this little settlement grow." (That must be Skotland talking.)

"You bet." (Could it be John Landin?)

"I didn't think Marysville, or my Calmar, would ever become such a railroad center. Brother, how easy to get to California these days." (That was Alf Clark.)

"You bet." (Landin again.)

"Remember when I first came here, how I lived in a cave (Henry Tweedt's farm) and had to overcome my fear of guns so I could put some rabbit and pheasant on a tree trunk table?" (Skotland)

"That's for sure; but remember the first store Pete and I built? Brother, it ended up right plunk in the middle of the main street. It's right west of where they've got the band stand."

"That's pretty good." (Landin's surely vociferous.)

"You know, God has really been good to us. We planted the seed here and have watched it grow for a century. Somebody ought to write a history of Calmar."

"You bet."

"God has cradled Calmar from its very conception; and Brother, it needed cradling."

At that moment the belching smoke from engine No. 67 made me sneeze.

“What’s that noise?”

“Oh, just that Easterner sticking his nose in our business.”

*I heard three splashes inside the large silver tank as if—
as if three people were diving into the water and going swimming.*

Great Scott! Can ghosts go swimming -- in our drinking water?



Thore P. Skotland and his wife

CHAPTER I

The Melting Pot

A billion years ago when the world turned in the lathe of time, a visitor to the Mississippi Valley would have found a vast sea stretching from the Appalachian mountains to the Rockies and from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico.

THE POT HAS A BOTTOM

Through slow moving periods, the restless waves lapped at the rocks of the shores, reducing them to sand particles. Gradually the sand raised the floor of the sea, and the water was driven back until the granite peaks of Iowa first saw the sunlight. So Iowa, "The Beautiful Land", was born.

Repeatedly the sea crept in, and according to the climate, plant, and animal life of a given geologic period, the various rock and mineral deposits were laid. Then came the time which gave to Calmarians most of the soil which is underneath their feet.

THE POT BOILS

At this prehistoric period the sea was teeming with innumerable lime shelled creatures, coral and molluses, which deposited their hard, earthy shells at the ocean's bottom. For millions of years the action of the water ground these derelict shells into a residue of silty lime and gently dropped them into layer upon layer of limestone.

SOIL FORMATION

Then came another cataclysmic change. The ocean was rolled back to the Gulf and the Great Lakes, and a small but growing river was formed which would some day be known as the father of all rivers. Meanwhile, the wind, the rain, the frost, and the heat cracked the limestone into tiny particles of soil. Plant life thus took root. Eons came and went, and such weathering of the rock, with the eroding power of flowing water, transformed the level rocky surface into a rough country with high hills and deep gullies. Hence, all of Iowa possessed the topography that only northeast Iowa has today.

And why does the northeastern part of Iowa, beginning at Calmar, still possess this wild hilly flavor? Why is Calmar the gateway to the scenic "Little Switzerland" of America?

GLACIAL AGE

The answer lies in the great glacial movements. When white winter refused to yield to the gentle breath of spring, and snow fell incessantly, a great sheet of ice, hundreds of feet thick, was formed. This ushered in the ice age. Gradually this mass moved out of the north; and from Nova Scotia to the Canadian Rockies, it moved southward over the Middle West. During thousands of years, it moved slowly, grinding down the Iowa hills and filling up the valleys.

GLACIERS MISS CALMAR

Yet, significantly, the glacial mass moved around, but not across an area beginning with Calmar, north to Minnesota, and extending to Wisconsin and Illinois; so that this scenic spot was left with its hills, gullies, bluffs and rock outcroppings.

With the passing of time, the great glaciers, now known as the Nebraska sheet, disappeared and Iowa enjoyed temperate climate. All of Iowa, except the northeast, was as smooth as a table top and covered with a layer of clay and crushed rock left by the flowing waters of a gigantic, melting glacier. This gave Iowa her subsoil.

Once again the world turned on the lathe of time; and another ice sheet, the Kansan, came and went leaving a layer of subsoil consisting of sand, gravel, and boulders. Three more glaciers became hoary kings only to be dethroned by the power of the sun! None of these affected "Little Switzerland". (Technically, the Kansan sheet did reach Calmar.)

CALMAR ON WATER-SHED

Calmar, located on the primary ridge of "Little Switzerland", is the "Southwestern Gateway" to the Northeastern pre-glacial scenic topography complete with lower sandstone, galina, limestone, magnesium layer, and trenton limestone, containing fossils of odd and beautiful shapes and here and there outcroppings of iron ore without commercial value. To the north of Calmar, the water flows into the Oneota river and to the south into the Turkey river. North of the Milwaukee railroad, in the heart of Calmar, there are no boulders from glacial drifts except a six ton one hauled by John B. Kaye and deposited on his lawn to exhibit to the public. This is the only glacial drift specimen in a part of town never touched by the glaciers.

FIRST SETTLER

It was to this scenic spot that Thore P. Skotland, a Norwegian, came one delightful day in the spring of 1850. Perhaps his heart was warmed by a terrain which reminded him of the rugged beauty of Norway. Whatever his reason, he put his

roots down in a piece of land two miles north of the town of Calmar on the Reuben Boe farm.

True, he had been preceded by a German settler in the southern part of the township, but nothing is known of him, and all search has led to a dead end.

Thore P. Skotland, Calmar's first settler, was soon joined by others. Forces were operating in the world's economy which brought settlers streaming over the old Government Military road between Fort Atkinson and Fort Crawford at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. Across the seas the Scandinavian countries were beset by food shortages. Hundreds flocked to the new world. Many of these were Norwegians who settled in eastern Calmar, but there was also a sprinkling of Swedes and Danes.

Meanwhile, in Germany and Bohemia internal unrest in the form of growing military machines, sent more emmigrants to the States. The German, Bohemian and Swiss settled primarily in the western part of Calmar. Here and there a few Winnebago Indians and some French and a few English traders completed the internationalization of Calmar. Few towns have ever had so many nationalities enrich its settling and founding, a tribute indeed to its melting pot efficiency.

In the United States other forces were sending people westward. The Indians had been "swindled" of most of their land by treaties.

In Iowa the savage Sioux had been beaten back by the Winnebagoes and white men. Fort Atkinson had been closed in 1848, so it was quite clear that whites could move into the northeast part of Iowa with comparative safety.

FISH IN THE POT

Furthermore the panics of 1837 and 1847 were depressing pocketbooks in the East, so the West beckoned as a place to get rich or at least to own land, and land was plentiful since the Northwest Territory was opened! Land agents with fabulous schemes descended upon county seats (Decorah no exception) to lure the "suckers". Land which had been bought from the French Government under the Louisiana Purchase for a few cents per acre and was designed by Uncle Sam to resell to honest citizens with a determination to make a living, for fifty cents to one dollar and a half per acre had skyrocketed to the incredible figure of four dollars to five dollars per acre. Nevertheless, the people came, staked out claims, bought land and struggled on.

GOD AND GOLD

Add to these forces, the fever of the gold rush of 1849 and the resultant frustration of thousands who found no gold,

and you have a two-way migration. Humanity was jostling humanity, with some seeking gold, but stopping in Iowa to find God; while others who sought God were lured by their hidden love for gold. Two of the most prominent early settlers, Alfred Clark and Peter Clawson, left the gold fields of California and on the eastward trek were fascinated by the beauty of "Little Switzerland".

BROTHERS AT LAST

Diligently in 1850 Thore P. Skotland started to build his house of sod and grass. He saw only three Indians and three white men in six months but was cheered by the arrival of Thorsen Land, Lars Land, and Andre P. Sandager. Put yourself in Skotland's place. You have not seen your kinfolk or any humans in months and then three strapping countrymen walk in! How would you feel? Happy? Surely! Wait a minute, though, the records reveal these three men are not only fellow countrymen, but are brothers in the flesh. Skotland must have been hilariously happy, but any reader would be confused. How could four men with different last names be brothers? Norwegian custom decrees that the surname belonged to the land, estate, or farm. To leave your estate was to leave behind your last name. Hence, each of the brothers chose different names. At first, Thore went by the name of Peterson but changed it later in favor of the name of the lovely old estate, Skotland, where he and his bride had spent hours of reverie and early love.

In 1851 the original quintette was enlarged by the addition of seven, who were, Ole Sherven Sr., Ole Sherven Jr., Erick Stovern, Ole P. Haugen, Andrew L. Kittlesby, Thron H. Enger and Thora Bagaaron. Little is known about these men, except that Andrew L. Kittlesby outlived all of them.

In the following year, 1852, Kittlesby was joined by his father, Lars P. Kittlesby, and his brother, Peter L. Kittlesby.

THE ORIGINAL "21"

In 1853 Ole A. Flaskerud, (father of the Flaskerud brothers), Ole P. Bjornstad, (father of Peter Olsen), Erick Flaskerud, and Even Fristad, (father of H. E. Fristad), joined the settlement.

In 1854 Alf Clark and Peter Clawson, disappointed in gold fields, arrived. Also, John P. Landin and Charles G. Holbeck decided to cast lots on the ridge. These plus the others brought the original nucleus of the settlement to twenty-one men.

Add to this the following men who arrived in 1844: two Englishmen, George Yarwood and Henry Wheatman; also Ole P. Tenold, Ole Trickerd, Ole O. Ramberg, Sr., John P. Hove, Ole O. Styve, Jacob Stenseth, and Lars Heried.

Many of these and others had been living for a short time in the Norwegian and Swedish settlements of Wisconsin and northern Illinois and were encouraged to move on in the hope of founding other towns where their people could live in "little Norways" and "Swedens".



Jacob Stenseth and wife, early settlers

SOME "FIRSTS" IN CALMAR

Ole P. Tenold put his cash into land very near the village of Calmar, and some of it is still in the hands of his descendants. He later moved into Calmar and became the first shoemaker specializing in large tough skins for pioneers to plod over the rolling land. The first blacksmith, Harold Ellingsen, did not arrive until 1857. He spent nearly fifty years in his trade and was considered an excellent craftsman.

WESTERN CALMAR

So much for eastern Calmar, now consider the western part, settled mostly by Germans, Bohemians, and Swiss. The earliest settlers of this part made a business center of Spielville. These were Charles Krock, who arrived in 1849, Joseph Spielman in 1850, George Herzog and, Conrad Riehle in 1851. Krock was a German who might have been the first settler in the township, except for the fact that the location of his land was nearer to Sumner township. Riehle was a German and brought his entire family with him. Herzog, an Alsatian, was also married but did not bring his family over until he was settled.

SPIELVILLE BORN, DIES, BORN AGAIN

Joseph Spielman, a Bavarian, the main wheel in Spielville's development, built a log house, which was the first building erected. Within a year he built a sawmill on Spielman's creek, near its confluence with the Turkey River. The huge flood of 1853 (the creek was then as large as Turkey River) outwitted the "name-giving" Spielman and carried off the sawmill.

However, with real German grit, Spielman rebuilt the sawmill plus a grist mill. This collection of buildings was called Spielville, afterwards anglicized to Spillville.

BOHEMIANS ARRIVE

Meanwhile, the first Bohemian settlers began to arrive in the spring of 1854. They passed up the "foreigners" in Colfax village and headed to the western part of the township where "a few Germans lived" because they felt they could get along with these continentals. These settlers were Martin Pospisil, John Klimosh, Frank Payer, Wenzel Mikesh, Andrew Kaledek, John Novak. The latter three brought their families. These men were physically strong and great workers with a love for the streams and the rolling terrain. To this day the "national consciousness" of these early settlers is so strong that a play or movie in their tongue draws huge crowds. It is a credit to strong family ties.

Ruth Chlack of Watertown relates how her husband's grandfather arrived in Spillville at the age of 12. He knew no one and felt lonely and isolated in a strange country. To relieve his loneliness he went hunting one day with his nearest neighbor. While crossing a stream, they looked up in time to see the sun completely black out. Too young to know anything about the sun's eclipse, he thought it was the end of the world. Thus did the new world frighten him, until the sun shone again.

THE SWISS

Also in 1854 J. J. Haug, Jacob Stelzer, J. H. Hinterman, Felix Meyer, J. H. Meyer, and John Loeffl arrived and settled near the Summer line. All were from Switzerland, and with the exception of Haug and Stelzer, had families. These men left their beautiful Alps to find new opportunities in a new world. They were doubly delighted to find a section where the streams cascaded rapidly and rock outcroppings glistened in the sun. True, there were no snow-capped mountains, but in the winter when the wind howled and the snow fell in abundance, the men remarked "what a wonderful little Switzerland". Some years later Samuel Colvin, state geologist, who knew of these preglacial eruptions, labeled northeastern Iowa as the "Switzerland of Iowa".

HAUG HITS HOMER

Mr. J. J. Haug rapidly became the head of his community and contributed much to its upbuilding. The confidence of his people was unlimited in his business leadership. Mr. Haug along with Thos. P. Skarland and Lars Land were the first trustees of the township and Charles G. Holbeck, the first clerk.

FIRST PLATTING

While all of the township was buzzing with new settlers, the hub of excitement was in Calmar village (then referred to as Marysville and also "Whiskey Grove") where Victor Voengstadt, a surveyor from Dubuque, was busy plotting sixteen blocks with the Railroad Hotel Annex (Calmar Hotel) as the focal point. The plot was signed September 15, 1854, with the names Alfred Clark, Aaron Newbolt, district clerk, David Reed, county judge. It was not filed until November 21, 1854, by Nelson Burdick, recorder of deeds of Winneshiek County. Thirty-two blocks were added on November 22, 1856. A day of dedication with much celebrating over a town with forty-eight blocks was held on June 20, 1856. An error in this plotting, due to compass compensation caused the streets to vary slightly in their direction from the cardinal points. Although this was a significant mistake, nevertheless, it fits well with the topography and traverses the ridge of the watershed. However, it has meant that many of the buildings in town were ultimately built overlapping other property. Particularly is this true of the theater building and all buildings on that block which are built several feet over on city property. (Hence, we have the unique fact that the town is taxing its own property—or should the lines be straightened?)

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

At this time the whole area was referred to by Alfred Clark and his cronies as "Marysville", after a name he loved very much—adopted from Marysville, California, a charming gold mining town on the banks of the Sacramento river. Clark was a Swede and came to this section after a somewhat disappointing time in the gold field of California. It was learned, however, that another Marysville already existed in Iowa; so another name had to be found. Then arose one of the interesting legends of the period.

In 1853 the Flower brothers, two Canadian traders, hit this section, wearing the latest in black hats, knee boots, and chamois breeches. History tells us they were sharpers and felt that once they could own Fort Atkinson (which was for sale) life would be a flowery bed of ease. They inveigled a widow into putting in the money, bought off the other bidder for \$25.00 (which was to be paid off several years later through sawing wood), and purchased the Fort for \$3,521.00. The "Canadians" were now in a position to trade with the Indians.

It was easier to deal with the Indians in the timber, and an ideal spot was a large grove a half mile east of Calmar. Previously early bootleggers had used this grove to sell whiskey

to the Indians. Another report indicates that the sharpers from the Fort were taking care of the Indians, soldiers, and all who cared for the "fire water". Several raids were made upon Whiskey Grove, but always the bootleggers managed to hide their barrels in the grove and escaped indictment. (Tradition says that the barrels were never found, although men winked when they later saw large, luxuriant clumps of grass which, when eaten by the cows, made them frisky.)

WHISKEY GROVE LEGEND

Hence, when John P. Landin, also a Swede, came over the Military Trail to Fort, he enquired of Squire Cooney (an Irishman) where he could find some of his countrymen. Mr. Cooney directed Landin to Alfred Clark who kept a store at "Whiskey Grove". After hoeing corn to show his appreciation to his guest, Landin came to Whiskey Grove and discovered that the Grove was not the group of buildings, but rather some trees a half mile east where the bootleggers brought barrels of whiskey for Fort Crawford, just at the period when the soldiers and Indians received their government pensions. Whiskey Grove was never applied directly to the spot where Calmar was built, but only to general locale around Calmar.

CALMAR, A SWEDISH NAME

So Landin returned to talk with Clark. Clark informed him that the little settlement now had a new name for it was no longer Marysville, and the name Whiskey Grove was a misnomer; but his town was to be called Calmar. "I have named it after my old home on the southeast coast of Sweden, Kalmar Sound."

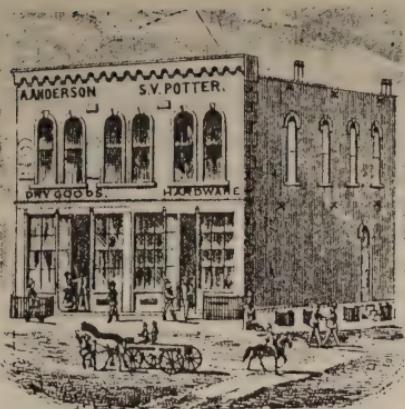
Kalmar Sound had attracted attention on July 20, 1397, when a pact known as the "Union of Kalmar" had been signed by the representatives of the three Scandinavian countries. This united the countries under one rule and crown for a long period.

FIRST BUILDING IN 1854

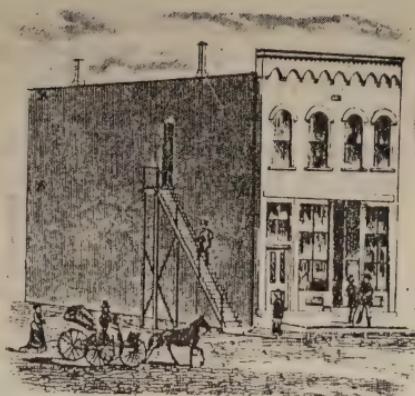
Soon Kalmar was spelled Calmar and was associated with four buildings, one "store" which, on completion of the survey, was located in the center of Main Street, (west of the band stand just north of Iowa State Bank). It served as a "variety store" and a dwelling, and although only a lean to shanty of logs, packing boxes, and burlap, it housed the first mercantile enterprise in Calmar.

WANT A FREE SHOWER?

Next, in 1854, the hotel was built and located north of the store. It was operated by Henry Miller. Shingles



Bjonerud's Store and Friendly Tavern as they looked when building was first built



Bud Ean's Tavern is now located in this old land mark

were scarce at this time and so the hotel was roofed over with canvas and remained that way until shingles appeared again in the river town, Dubuque. Guests often had showers whether they wanted them or not, but at least the roofing is a tribute to pioneer invention and ingenuity. Henry Miller was also associated with this development.

Mr. Emmet Morris, principal of the Irving School, Maywood, Illinois, sent the author some interesting facts through the kindness of Vincent Yager. The Morris family had a large part in Calmar's history. The following is what he wrote:

"Charles Halbeck was the next to start a general store, which was markedly larger than the first. Halbeck sold out to a Mr. Eno, who built a much larger building and enjoyed a much increased business. Eno sold out to John Scott. The building in this chain of events stood, as the original was enlarged from time to time about where the old Nockels, later



Sauser's Hardware and Wenthold's Store now occupy P. Olson's Fine Store of yesterday

Frana, opera house is, just east of the Weselmann meat market. A Mr. Hawley started a similar store about where the Giesing Brothers property is, just south across the street from the Miller Wagon Factory.

"A hotel was started about where the Winneshiek County Bank building now stands. The hotel was operated in turn by Ben Austin, John Balweber, William Reece, and William Summers; later by others, whose names could not be recalled. John Peterson, an attorney, settled in Calmar in the early 1860's but stayed only a short time. A Mr. Fletcher started a lumber yard on about the same spot where the present lumber yard stands, just north of the Miller Wagon Factory. At about the same time Robert Scott set up an agency to sell the newly invented Prairie du Chien fanning mills."

Soon, Peter Clawson and Alfred Clark built a saloon and the Calmar House, which was completely ruined by fire in August of 1873.

WELLS, WHISKEY, AND WATER

The need arose for a public water supply, so John P. Landin set about to dig on the commons (underneath the present band stand). When he reached the depth of fourteen feet without striking water, he retired one night without covering the hole. That night Peter Clawson came merrily out of the saloon and crossed the public square to his store. Clawson got to the well, fell into its yawning fourteen feet, shook himself slightly, got up, crawled out, and continued on none the worse. You can bet your bottom dollar that whiskey in those days really made a man so limber and relaxed that he could withstand such a shock.

FOUR EGGS FOR A PENNY

In 1855, John P. Landin had advanced from his capacity as hostler in the hotel stable and the digger of wells to that of groceryman. He built a wooden building on the site now occupied by the Clawson & Landin Block (Bjonerud store and Friendly Tavern). He sold, in addition to all types of groceries, whiskey and beer. The beer he brewed in an underground cave nearby the store (What happened to the cave?). Much of his goods were sold on the barter basis with butter and eggs acting as the medium of exchange. A dozen of eggs brought 3c and butter 6c per pound. Whiskey sold for a nickel a glass, and you could secure such a "square drink" with 20 eggs. A "nog" drink (whiskey and egg) demonstrated the saloon keeper's generosity by throwing in the egg "gratis".

Clark's final venture in building was the Huston House which he built in 1856 of material so sound that a portion of

it was still standing in 1915. Due to the influence of his business enterprise he was soon appointed postmaster and was the first to hold the post. The postoffice was held in his store. He was followed by P. M. Stanberg, N. S. Lornejoy, and John Scott.

Early Calmar consisted of four business places, between twenty and thirty houses, and plenty of mud in the commons and on the old Indian trails.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Most of the houses were constructed of rough, mill slabbed lumber, finished with shingles, and unpainted. Other houses, particularly on the farms, were either "dug outs" or sod houses with four poles and sod. Still others were made from packing boxes, stones, and canvas. Usually these were located near a creek or spring which, at this period, were fairly common, since the water table had not declined some thirty feet as it has during the century. The grasses and timber were luxuriant and helped to control the amount of water available.

In spite of the primitive living conditions, the people were basically happy and well adjusted. The men did most of the "socializing" in the saloons, and women seldom got together except at a quilting bee or infrequent church socials.

Some "barn raising" and "house raising" were done, but not much. One settler near Decorah dumbfounded the area by building his house with the lumber from one tree. Human beings were scarce and unhurried, but were always welcome in any household.

THE KIDS HAD NOTHING TO DO?

Children were seen and not heard, helped with all the chores, and went to school little, as facilities were not available. A one room school was not built until 1868-1870. In a large measure they helped mother make their clothes; baths were scarce commodities during the cold winter; a sweet tooth was satisfied by rock candy and peppermint, with licorice and taffy now and then as rare treats. Relaxation periods brought stories and songs from the "old country". While in New York City, people on the street sang "Carry Me Back To Old Virginey", and the church worshippers reveled in "Jesus Lover of My Soul", these youngsters because of transplanted parents, seldom heard the tunes.

Nevertheless, through hard work, they developed a love for America. Few of them knew the pledge to the flag, and fewer of them knew anything about the United States Constitution. Yet they developed real family spirit, good commercial life, and a ripe soil for the growth of human liberty.

HERE LIES THE "UNKNOWN PIONEER"

Of the true hardships, privations, and penalties paid by these pioneers you can only read, but never fully appreciate. It can be summed up by an unknown settler, (not the government teamster listed in Bailey's volume), who on an unknown day of an unknown month in an unknown year, took his wheat upon his back to the old mill at Eldorado. His wheat was ground between two large stone wheels. While he was returning, the winds whipped up a freezing gale, the temperature dropped below zero, and a pioneer found a new world of eternal frost and snow! He became another grain of wheat in a mill which grinds slowly but exceedingly fine. So did the gods cradle the beginning of Calmar.

CHAPTER II

Son of A Bear Hunter

Norway, at the turn of the nineteenth century, was caught in a vicious economic condition. There were too many mouths to feed with too little land to till. Some people migrated to the United States, others supplemented their meager supplies with increased hunting, and others merely existed. Our story concerns one of the greatest hunters.

THORE, THE HUNTER

Come with me and witness the champion bear hunter who is accredited with performing an almost unexcelled feat, the killing of one hundred bears. See him, with his son, Thore, stalk a bear. It is early morning and while the champion sleeps, Thore awakens and visits the bear trap. The trap fails to work properly and Thore is face to face with a murderous grizzly. Fortunately his hands clutch his father's old musket. In the ensuing scramble with the enraged bear, the musket goes off. Thore struggles out from underneath the bear as the winner, but carries with him a morbid fear of guns and bears. Even in later life in America, teeming with game, he was so enslaved by his childhood terror that he dreaded any loud noise.

This is our initial dramatic introduction to Thore P. Skotland, who, in the spring of 1850, became the first settler in Calmar. However, it is fitting to allow one of his own kinsmen, the Reverend T. L. Rosholt, who was introduced to the author by Idor Bjonerud, to tell the narrative in his words. Mr. Bjonerud, incidentally, saved the day by this introduction, or this chapter would not have been written. Here is the account as told by the Reverend T. L. Rosholt of Decorah.

EARLY FAMILY LIFE

"Thore P. Skotland went by the name of Thore Peterson during the first years he was in America. It was the rule in Norway that a son of Peter should be called Peterson. After a few years, when he realized that here in America he was free to pick any name he chose, he picked the name of Skotland instead of Sandager, his father's name. He gave us no reason for this selection unless it could be that he stayed on the Skotland estate in Norway when he married Ingeborg Land. His parents were Peder H. and Gjertrud Sandager who lived in Soknedalen, Norway. Thore had four brothers and

three sisters, Hans, Ole, Anders, Endre, Marthe, Rannog, and Ele. Thore was the first to emigrate from Norway and the first to settle in Calmar. All the rest of his brothers and sisters except Anders, followed and settled near Calmar. The Sandagers, the Bjoneruds, the Stenseths, the Erlands, and the Dyrlands are descendants of Peter and Gjertrud Sandager.

TRANSPORT PROBLEMS

"Thore P. Skotland left Norway in March, 1848, with his wife, Ingeborg, and his two children, Peter and Gjertrud, the latter being only three months old at the time. They arrived in New York in June of the same year. The boat on which they sailed was loaded with iron and left little room for the passengers. Passangers had to bring their own food; to bring food enough to last for three months was quite a problem.

"There was no railroad farther west than Buffalo, New York, at that time. The immigrants travelled west by rail, canal boat, and sailboat to Chicago. Mr. Skotland planned to take a homestead on what is now part of the city of Chicago, but he found the soil too swampy and not much good for farming. He then continued with the rest to Jefferson Prairie, Wisconsin. He stayed there only until the spring of 1850, when the Reverend C. L. Clausen called a group of Norwegians to meet at Prairie du Chien to form a Norwegian colony. The Reverend Mr. Clausen, who then had a parish at Rock Prairie, Wisconsin, was hindered from coming. Twenty-five wagon loads of immigrants then left and went up to Coon Prairie, Wisconsin. Mr. Skotland and his brother-in-law, Mr. Eilert Land, decided to cross the Mississippi and go west. They crossed on a ferryboat operated by treadle power using mules. After two days, they landed in Springfield township, and each staked a claim; but they lost the claims, because they wanted to look around first before fully deciding where to locate.

THE FIRST SHELTER

"Mr. Skotland picked a claim in Calmar township about two and one-half miles northwest of Calmar, or what is now Mr. Reuben Boe's farm, (father of Mrs. Ralph Weselmann). This was in the spring of 1850. That summer he saw only six people, three white people and three Indians. On September 8, 1850, before the 'dugout' was finished and the wagon was still used for a bed, the third child was born. This child was named Inger, and was baptized on July 7, 1851, by the Reverend C. L. Clausen at an open service held on Mr. Paul Egge's farm four and one-half miles southeast of Decorah, Iowa. This was the first Lutheran service held west of the Mississippi. It was held in the open air, because there were no buildings large enough to accommodate the number of people present.

EARLY HARDSHIPS

"Mr. Skotland and family went through considerable hardships the first two years on their homestead. At one time, they had to live for ten weeks on flour made from corn, cracked by pounding with a stone. He walked to McGregor to buy flour, but often there was none to be had. When he did get it, he carried the flour as well as other groceries home on his back, forty miles.

"On October 10, 1850, Skotland's brother, Endre Sandager, arrived, and within five years all his brothers and sisters had located around Calmar.

"Mr. Thore P. Skotland was one of the three incorporators of Luther College, Decorah, Iowa. He was also a member of its first board of trustees and a member of its first building committee.

"In 1874, he sold out and moved to Otter Tail County, Minnesota, where he died in 1903 at the age of 81."

MAN OF CHARACTER

This concludes the story as narrated by the Reverend Mr. Rosholt.

Thore P. Skotland was a man of real character. His gifts to Luther College were always generous and were supported by his prayers. The growth and influence of this fine institution indicates the solid Christian faith upon which it was based. We salute Luther College, in part a child of the vision of Thore P. Skotland.

Of his early trials, there is little record. How did he live through the terrible winter of 1856-57 when snow fell so deeply that only roofs and tree tops could be seen? This was covered by a layer of ice so hard in spots that one could stand upright and so soft in others that horses and people broke through and were trapped.

The early Indians, primarily the Winnebagoes, were of little trouble. They returned again and again to the Winnebago region because of their great love for the land. Once the alarm was given that the Indians were coming, and dozens gathered near the Old Stone Church to await the attack. We do not know if Thore and his family were among them, but we do know the alarm was false.

In 1859, a great prairie fire swept through Northeast Iowa. How did Thore meet it? Little is known, but his family was saved. Had he learned from the Indians the trick of burning grass and weeds in limited areas and then putting out the fires, so that when the great prairie flames reached the charred areas they would automatically die?

Whatever his obstacles, he went right on homesteading.

He planted his wheat and tended his crops. The fire of experience has burned the chaff and left the wheat to be ground by the mills of the gods.

The quality of the wheat germ left by the spirit of Skotland can be judged best by the quality of the institution he founded. His physical and spiritual contributions to Luther College and Calmar are fitting memorials.

HERE IS WHAT YOU CAN DO

Some spare hour drive out to the Henry Flaskerud farm northwest of Calmar and look at the old log house. According to Clara Kittlesby, as related to Andrew Hillesland, this is the second house which was built by Thore P. Skotland. Now used as a grainary, the log house supplanted the sod "dugout" built in 1850.

Would it not be creditable if the citizens of Calmar bought this log house and placed it in Calmar as a reminder of the price our first pioneer paid? Properly reconstructed and set in the city park, it should carry a sign bearing the Norse proverb—

"Vain is the strong oak in our ships
Without strong hearts in our men."

CHAPTER III

Harvest on A Ridge and in A Valley

Organized religion came to Calmar seven years after Thore P. Skotland put down his roots in the preglacial soil. Although strong personal religious convictions prevailed, and the Reverend Niles Brandt made missionary trips through the territory in 1851, 1852, and 1853, it was not until 1857 that the first church was built.

THE OLD STONE CHURCH

It was erected on the highest hill in town and was made of stone. Thrond Eugen probably gave the site, and the building was known for years as the "Old Stone Church". In reality it was the Calmar Evangelical Lutheran Church, and it was founded by the following: Thore P. Skotland (another star in his crown), Endre Sandager, Thrond Eugen,



The old Stone Church which preceded The Calmar Lutheran Church

Lars Land, Ole Haugen, Andrew Kittlesby, Ole Flaskerud, Ole P. Bjonerud, Even Frestah, Jacob Stenseth, and Ole Shervin.

Previous to 1857 the Lutheran families of Calmar travelled to Washington Prairie where services were held in the homes. The first permanent pastor was the Reverend V. Koren who preached his first sermon at Washington Prairie on December 25, 1853, in the house of Torgen Busness. When weather permitted, services were held in the out-of-doors. Certainly these pioneers wanted only to worship God.

"PIONEER'S DAYS" DIARY

It will be of interest to those who love Thore P. Skotland to know that he brought the Reverend Mr. Koren to "Whiskey Grove". Mrs. Koren kept a diary entitled "Pioneer Days" in which she says, "On March 13th, 1854, Mr. Thore Skotland came to take the Reverend Koren on his first visit to 'Whiskey Grove' where he spent the day. It was a hard trip in an old dilapidated buggy, very muddy and raining hard—but mild as a summer day."

Thus did the early leaders seek to persuade men to come to Christ.

THE MINISTERS

A list of the pastors of the yoked churches reads as follows:

The Reverend V. Koren, 1853-1910; assistant, the Reverend O. Turmo, 1874-1883.

J. Bjorgans, 1882-84, lived in Washington Prairie with the Korens.

The Reverend A. K. Sagan, 1884-1888, first resident pastor to live in Calmar.

The Reverend Paul Koren, 1888-1920.

This ended sixty-seven years of faithful service by the Korens, father and son, and is a wonderful tribute to the pastor-people respect for one another. In 1920 Calmar separated from Washington Prairie and called the Reverend J. W. Preus, as pastor. Now the minister's roll reads as follows:

The Reverend J. W. Preus, 1920-1925.

The Reverend H. A. Preus, 1924-1944.

The Reverend C. T. Paulson, 1945-1949.

The Reverend J. N. Lunde, 1950-

THE PRESENT BUILDING

The "Old Stone Church" proved adequate to the people's needs for a few years. It was later enlarged and a steeple added. The stone gave way to a frame building in 1885. This building was struck by lightning on July 30, 1887, and burned to the ground. Work on another edifice, identical to the one destroyed, was commenced that fall and completed in 1888. It cost \$4,800 and was built by Erick and Andrew Flaskerud.

Lena Sandager, who so diligently submitted these facts, points out some interesting stories. We give them to you in her own words.

LEGENDS ABOUT KOREN

"Pastor Koren's first mode of transportation was often on horseback. His sleigh consisted of runners and thills constructed of hickory limbs. On top of the runners there was a box with a board over it to be used as a seat. The harness was mostly of clothesline. His buggy had wooden axles and lurch pins and of course no springs. Not one iron or wire nail was used in the construction. Transportation must have improved soon; but even so, it took a long time to cover the vast territory.

"Another story was about a woman in this community who became very ill. News, too, travelled slowly in those days; so by the time the news reached the pastor and he could come to see her, she was out helping her husband make hay. The pastor told her the work was much too heavy and admonished her not to do such work. She looked down from the load of hay and said, 'It is written, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread." ' Koren replied, 'Yes, but He said that to the man and not to the woman.'

"It was not only of his own parishioners that Dr. Koren was solicitous. Mr. Boice, a former superintendent of Calmar school, told his class (in the '90s) that Pastor Koren had passed his home one day when he was in the act of clipping his pony, thinking he could make him more comfortable with the warm weather coming on. The pastor stopped and looked on for a while and then said, 'Mr. Boice, nature will take care of that job for you. Good day!'"

FAITH IS STRONG

The church has always been strong spiritually and numerically. It maintains Sunday School for all ages, choirs, Luther League, and the Ladies' Aid which boasts of more than seventy members. Some years ago when H. Grimes was here as a parochial teacher, he trained and conducted a fine male chorus. Emma S. Olson also directed a splendid women's chorus which sang, not only in church, but at important public functions. Under their splendid pastor, the Reverend J. N. Lunde, the church looks forward to carrying out some remodeling plans to keep pace with their beautiful and modern kitchen.

It is significant, however, that the author, upon worshipping in this church, found himself at home with people who knew and loved God. The light of Skotland and Koren still burns.

While the spiritual sheaves were being harvested on the ridge, other sheaves were being prepared in the valley. Here the Catholic, German Lutheran, and Community Churches were spiritual gleams in the eyes of those who also loved the Christ of Galilee.



The Calmar Lutheran Church



The Smallest Church in the world
— Festina

1982731

EARLY CATHOLIC HISTORY

Since there was no Catholic Church in Calmar in the 50's, 60's, or early 70's, the Catholic settlers attended services at Ossian, Festina, Fort Atkinson, or Spillville. The following is a summary from the "Centennial History of the Archdiocese of Dubuque".

"The St. Aloysius parish at Calmar is listed among the youngest of the Catholic parishes in Winneshiek County. The Rev. D. H. Murphy, pastor of Ossian, organized St. Aloysius parish in the spring of 1875. Prior to that time, the few Catholic families living in and around Calmar, in order to attend Mass, were obliged to go to one of the neighboring parishes - Ossian, Festina, Fort Atkinson, or Spillville.

"As early as 1874, the Catholic people of Calmar were already considering plans for the organization of a parish in this locality, but it was not until the spring of 1875, that Timothy Ahern, a man of deep and abiding faith, and one of the staunchest of the early pioneers in these parts, went to Ossian and made arrangements with Father Murphy to come to Calmar to say Mass in the Ahern home twice a month. This arrangement continued until the month of June of that year; then a committee in charge made arrangements with the Calmar School Board whereby the use of the public school building for divine services was secured at the rental of three dollars per month.

"Father Murphy, as well as his immediate successor, usually

made the journey from Ossian to Calmar by team; yet sometimes when the roads were quite impassable, he made the trip on horseback or by hand-car.

"In the meanwhile, steps were taken and plans were laid to build a little mission church. The committee in full charge of raising funds and planning building operations was composed of the following: Timothy Ahern, Conrad Giesen, Joseph A. Giesing, Amandus Klein, Joseph Merrick, and M. O'Connor, Tim Ahern acting as chairman. Five lots were purchased by the committee in the fall of 1875. The building of the church was completed late in the summer of 1876 and it was dedicated soon thereafter by the Very Rev. Father McCarthy of Cresco, Dean of the district.

"Altars for the newly-erected church were secured from the Festina church which had recently installed three new altars.



St. Aloysius Church

THE CHOOSING OF A NAME

"One Sunday after Mass the parishioners held a meeting at which Father Murphy presided, for the purpose of selecting a name for their new church; various names were proposed; St. Aloysius was favored by both pastor and people, and was accordingly adopted.

"Over the tabernacle, on the high altar, there was placed a beautiful oil painting of St. Aloysius. This picture was said to have been painted by a famous Bohemian artist and was donated by the Sindelar family.

PIONEER CATHOLIC FAMILIES

"The pioneer Catholic families of St. Aloysius parish numbered about twenty-five to thirty. Among them we find these names: Timothy Ahern, Joseph Geising, Dennis Gil-martin, Michael Gilmartin, Amandus Klein, Joseph Merrick, Bernard Merrick, Andrew Gallagher, Thomas Ryan, Patrick Ryan, John Kemmer, Matthias Graf, Mike O'Connor, Bernard Urban, Mrs. Fred Rundloff, Mrs. Louis Miller, William Wentz, Charles Hird, Richard Cooper, Roger Donalty, Joseph Constan-tine, and John Dailey. Following closely after them we find the names of John G. Bruening, George Vohnfurter, Anthony Dostal. Conrad W. Giesen moved to town from Fort Atkinson in 1878 or 1879 and John Thaler came over from Spillville about the same time. A few years later, Peter Nockels and Herman Busch joined the parish.

SOME CATHOLIC "FIRSTS"

"The first baptism administered in St. Aloysius Church was that of Herman Joseph Klein, son of Amandus Klein and Mary Wagner. He was baptized November 26, 1876, by Father Murphy. The sponsors were Herman Busch and Mary Wentz.

"The first confirmation class was taken to Ossian and received with the class there in 1880 or 1881. Confirmation was administered for the first time in St. Aloysius Church by the Most Rev. John Joseph Keane, in the fall of 1901.

"The first marriage took place in June, 1877, when Kitty O'Connor became the bride of John T. Ahern.

"The first funeral was that of John Kemmer, a pioneer of the parish, who died in 1878. Previous to this time there was no Catholic cemetery in Calmar. Then and there Amandus Klein generously donated one-half acre of land for that purpose, and John Kemmer was the first one buried in the new cemetery.

"The Rev. P. A. R. Tierney succeeded Father Murphy as pastor of Ossian in the summer of 1879. Calmar remained a mission to Ossian until 1889. It then became a mission to Fort Atkinson with Father Kramolis as pastor.

"In the fall of 1895, a committee consisting of Timothy Ahern and Conrad Giesen journeyed to Dubuque and called upon Archbishop Hennessy. Of him they requested the favor of a resident pastor at Calmar. A few days later, Father John Norris, just arrived from Ireland, was appointed to Calmar and assumed his duties as the first resident pastor of St. Aloysius Church. He resided for a short while with Mr. Ahern, then rented a cottage near the church and finally moved into the newly-built parish rectory which was completed in the early summer of 1896.



The Parochial School and Rectory

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOL

"In the spring of 1899 a lot was purchased at the cost of \$535.00 as a suitable site for a parish school. The school was erected in 1901 and was ready for occupancy and opened in the fall of that year with an enrollment of forty-eight pupils. The first teachers were Sisters of the Presentation Order from Dubuque. That same year (1901) as soon as work on the school was well under way, preparations for enlarging the church were begun, as the parish had grown rapidly after the arrival of a resident pastor.

"Father Norris was succeeded by the Rev. James Ryan in the spring of 1905. Father Ryan administered to the spiritual needs of the parish until January, 1912, when he was followed by the Rev. T. J. Brady. Father Brady's stay in Calmar was brief for in April of 1912 he was transferred to the Dubuque Cathedral. In the same month and year, the Rev. William J. Cremer was appointed pastor of St. Aloysius Church. It was during the administration of Father Cremer that a change was made in the interior of church, school, and Sister's home. Father Cremer remained in Calmar until August, 1918, when he was succeeded by the Rev. Michael Kerper. In the summer of 1921, under the direction of Father Kerper, a new rectory was constructed at a cost of \$15,000.00 and the school was remodeled. The Sisters, incidentally, were given the old rectory as a residence, and so the entire school building was devoted to teaching purposes. An additional Sister was added to the teaching staff, bringing the number of Sisters up to six, with an enrollment in the school of 130 pupils.

"In June, 1923, Father Kerper was succeeded in the pastorate of St. Aloysius by the Rev. Albert S. Peikert, who for many years had been professor of history and spiritual director of Columbia College.

NEW EDIFICE ERECTED

“During the administration of Father Peikert improvements were made on the school and cemetery. The interior of the old St. Aloysius Church was remodeled and decorated. Improvements on the old church were still in progress, when on the morning of March 2, 1928, the edifice was completely destroyed by fire. Nothing daunted by this seemingly cruel test of Providence, steps were taken immediately toward planning a new church. The very competent architect, W. J. Van der Meer, B.N.A., of Rockford, Illinois, prepared the plans and specifications. The new edifice was beautifully designed after the Romanesque style of architecture. The contracts, together with the various church furnishings such as bells, altar, etc., brought the total cost of the edifice at the time of dedication to \$62,185.00. Building operations began August 12, 1928, and work was rushed along at a rapid pace so that by Sunday, September 30, everything was in readiness for the laying of the corner stone. It was estimated that two thousand people from far and near, including a goodly number of the clergy had come together for the occasion. The Very Rev. Michael Thiltgen, D.D., Dean of the district, delegated by the Most Rev. Archbishop, officiated at the Sacred Rites. The Right Rev. Monsignor T. Conry, President of Columbia College, Dubuque, delivered the festive sermon.

“On Thursday, May 23, 1929, the new church was solemnly dedicated. His Excellency, the Most Rev. James J. Keane, officiated in person and preached an appropriate sermon.

“Of the members of the parish who hearkened to the call of the Divine Master and embraced the religious life were four young ladies who entered the Sisterhoods, and one son of Calmar, now the Rev. Father Francis Sindelar, O.S.B., of Lisle, Illinois.”

Father Vallmecke came to assist Father Peikert in July 1985 and left in 1944 to take up his new parish, when Father

The Sister's Home



Clarence Neuses came as the assistant to Father Peikert. Father Peikert retired in 1946, and his going deeply stirred his people who loved him so much. At the same time Father Neuses went on to his new parish.

FATHER FRIEDMAN CARRIES ON

With the retirement of Father Peikert came the need of a new priest. This was fulfilled in the person of Father Peter Friedman. He has worked hard in retiring debts and putting the parish on a sound basis. The Rev. Father Hirsch served as assistant until 1948.

Now he looks forward to new stained glass windows and general remodeling. In time the school will need to be replaced and Father Friedman is alert to all of this. The school with an enrollment of 120 pupils is under the direction of the Franciscan Sisters of La Crosse. The parish, totaling 300 families, is worthy of your support for its activities are many. The Holy Name Society numbers fifty, the Rosary Society (for women) totals 120; and more than 120 belong to the National Council of Catholic Women. St. Aloysius has infinite possibilities as it continues to bring in the harvest unto God. The author often slips into the church for prayer and meditation and thoroughly enjoys its beauty.

THE METHODIST CHURCH

Meanwhile, in the valley the present day Community Church was developing. Mrs. Frank Uher has an original abstract



The Community (Methodist) Church

showing that in 1882 the Extension Committee of the Methodists bought land for the erection of the building. On this abstract the land can be traced back to Alfred Clark who

bought the land from the United States and later dedicated it to the town of Calmar. It is an important historical document.

Evolving slowly, the Methodist Church gradually grew in size and influence, maintaining resident pastors.

GERMAN LUTHERAN CONGREGATION

It is worthy to note the feeling of brotherhood during the 80's and 90's and later. At this time the German Lutherans, too few in number to build an edifice, obtained permission to worship in the building. The German Lutheran minister, Rev. Mr. Blessing, from Eldorado, where their strength was greater, came every other Sunday to conduct services and guide the people. He was a marvelous musician and well liked.

METHODISTS REALLY COMMUNITY MINDED

While the Community Church has always been served by the Methodist Conference it has set the pace for Christian ecumenicity. It is reported that the church was the first to have a Sunday School and individuals of all denominations attended until each group was able to make arrangements to serve the members of their own organizations. The early founders of the church in 1880 and 1881 were: John B. Kaye, T. W. Hazelton, T. N. Morrill, John Scott, F. Lewis George, S. V. Potter, D. G. Rodgers, and A. H. Hale.

ARNOLDS SERVE CAPABLY

Today the church is very capably served by two ordained ministers, the Reverend L. O. and E. A. Arnold. It is a happy husband and wife combination since they serve four churches in the Greater Burr Oak Parish of which Calmar is one. Their activities are many, embracing the following: Ladies' Aid with 16 members; Sunday School, 21 members; Youth Fellowship with 12 members, and Junior Fellowship also 12 members. Occasionally the author's daughter attended some function. Occasionally the author's daughters attend some function and they are always keenly delighted with the fun and fellowship.

REV. MR. PREUS SERVED TWO PARISHES

Although historically the story of the Trinity Lutheran Church does not belong in this period, nevertheless, it, too, is laboring for God in the valley. Calmar Evangelical Lutheran Church is the Mother church of Trinity. The Reverend H. A. Preus holds the unique distinction of serving both and has given more than a quarter of a century of faithful devotion to his flock in Calmar.

It is now fitting to quote this history as outlined in the dedicatory bulletin of Trinity on August 25, 1946.

"Trinity Lutheran Congregation of Calmar, Iowa, organized October 9, 1944, stems from Calmar Lutheran congregation

which was organized by the sainted Dr. U. V. Koren, who came to serve the Norwegian Lutheran immigrants of north-eastern Iowa in December 1853. Arriving from Norway, Koren established his residence at Washington Prairie which was his home until his death in December 1910. Congregations organized and served by him in N. E. Iowa and S. E. Minnesota were part of the old Norwegian Synod of which Koren was one of the pioneer founders. In time U. V. Koren became the outstanding church man among Norwegian Lutherans in America; and upon the death of J. A. Preus, long president, succeeded him in that office.

TRINITY LUTHERAN BACKGROUND

"The Calmar Lutheran church was a part of U. V. Koren's charge until his death and then that of his son and successor, Paul, who served until November 1920, when the Rev. J. W. Preus became its first resident pastor. For five years he was in charge, but due to ill health was given an assistant, his son,



The Trinity Lutheran Church

H. A. Preus, in May, 1925. Upon the death of his father, October 12, 1925, H. A. Preus became pastor in charge and remained so until October 1944, when the Calmar Lutheran congregation's majority had resolved to join the N.L.C.A. This the pastor could not do for reasons of conscience. The same was true in the case of 25 families of the congregation who then, October 9, 1944, organized Trinity Lutheran Congregation, resolved to join the Norwegian Synod, and called H. A. Preus as pastor.

"There was immediate need for a place of worship. The dining room of the Hotel Calmar was rented and served us well as a meeting place until now.

THE MEN AND WOMEN WORK HARD

"The newly organized congregation at once began to look for a site for church and parsonage. Within a month it secured the present property with a roomy house for a parsonage and a vacant lot on which to build our church for \$3,200.00. A building committee consisting of G. Sjulli, A. Kolaas, H. Twedt, John Wangness and E. Sunday, was elected and planned for and supervised the building of our church. Ground was broken for the church October 2, 1945, by the pastor. Excavation and pouring of concrete for the foundation was done by our men. The cornerstone was laid at a service November 18, 1945, by pastor N. A. Madson, then president of our Synod.

"Carlo Kaslin was in charge of building, getting the church under roof before winter. Work was resumed last spring, and carried on for the past three months in putting in water and sewer, installing lights, and finishing the interior in all details—all by our own members. Thus, labor to the value of at least \$3,000.00 has been done on our church by our men. For this valiant work we owe them much gratitude and pray God's blessing upon them. We are also grateful to members and congregations of our Synod, who encouraged us with their contributions for our building fund, and to our Synod's Church Extension Board for making a loan to us so we could build.

"Trinity congregation consists of about 120 souls, most of them charter members, and of which 31 are voting members.

"Our Sunday School is functioning effectively with five teachers in charge, who meet at regular intervals for study.

"The Young People's Society has endeavored to meet at least once a month, and at various times together with the Ladies' Aid, sponsored social gatherings.

"The choir of a goodly number of voices is functioning in order to beautify our services.

MANY ACTIVITIES

"A Ladies' Aid has been meeting regularly every other week and has contributed generous sums to our project.

"Under God's gracious blessing we are now privileged to continue our service of Him in this newly erected house of worship. We pray the Lord to continue His boundless favor and blessing upon us and our efforts to the glory of His Holy Name."

Today the church has grown and prospered with 120 souls on the scrolls. Their building is modern, pleasing, and worshipful. God is in their midst. This is the glory of America, that a man may worship God as he pleases, according to the dictates of his conscience.

Hence Calmar is not a city of many churches, but a few doing their work well under the Cross. Each one seems to know that the wheat fields have gone from our farms and that the old mills have long since fallen into decay. Yet they carry the spiritual conviction that the mills of the gods are grinding slowly, but surely, the souls of many diverse nationalities into an exceedingly fine entity with love for America and for God.

Thus do the mills of the gods grind—slowly but exceedingly fine.

PART TWO

1875 to 1898 . . . more or less



The Gods Say...

*Still Water
Runs No Mills*



Chapters

- IV THE COMING OF THE IRON HORSE
- V "MUSHROOM ON THE MEADOW"
- VI BET YOU 25,000 DOLLARS



An old aerial view of Calmar



Looking Northward on Route 52



Looking Southward on Route 52

CONVERSATION NUMBER TWO AT MIDNIGHT

One, two, three, four—a hundred more rungs to climb, and then I can spy on the spirits of yesterday. Man—this is eerie and scary business, but a book is a book. Sure enough, they are here. Wonder if it's the same trio. Wouldn't believe this stuff if it weren't for the scientific support of spirits as reported in Coronet, page 127, March, 1950. I inch forward so I can hear.

Skotland, "That Sherman fellow sure knows what he's talking about. War is hell for Southern as well as Northern boys."

Clark, "Not many of our Calmar boys in the fray, but they were pretty busy laying railroad ties and planting wheat."

Landin, "That's for sure."

Clark, "The railroad was a real boom to Calmar. Think of it—thirty-two trains a day and Conover just ashes in your mouth."

Skotland, "Towns are like people; they must have a purpose for being."

Landin, "You bet." (Intelligent contribution)

Skotland, "Look at Luther College. It's growing strong, because it has a purpose, serving God. That builds character. Look at the Old Stone Church and the rest of them; they have purpose, serving God and man."

Clark, "And the stores in Calmar, too, they're growing. Maybe it's because they are genuinely serving like we did in our one hoss shack store. Even got new fangled scales—and what funny clothes they sell!"

Landin, "You bet, but golly, what's that new game called baseball?"

Skotland, "Heard tell they throw a ball, and you hit it with a stick. Got to be quite a game. More people go to it than go to church or the old opera house. World's getting pretty bad. Maybe Christ will come back."

I inch closer to get a look at the three, when my foot slips against the tank, making a drum-like sound.

Landin, "Probably that nosy Easterner again."

Three splashes; three more ghosts gone swimming; I just don't care for drinking water these days.

CHAPTER IV

The Coming of The Iron Horse

"It'll never run—It'll never run!" were the shrill cries of an old lady, when she first saw George Stephenson's steam locomotive. Stephenson wearily applied the power to the crude piston, and the engine moved slowly and then attained the rapid speed of five to six miles per hour. Undaunted, the old lady piped, "You'll never stop it! You'll never stop it!"

LEGEND ON MECHANISTIC LAW

History has demonstrated the utter futility of the folly of old ladies (and young ones) who are unable to understand the law of mechanistic progress. In a few short decades, after



Who are these "rails" gathered around old 777?

Stephenson's miracle, the railroad was changing man's outlook and dwarfing distances. By 1848, a year of destiny, which should have changed the world but failed, the railroad had reached from New York City to Buffalo, New York, supplanting, in many instances, the canals of the East.

In 1864 it was learned that the Milwaukee line would run a railroad through Calmar. Excitement ran high, not only because it would make Calmar a central market place, but

because this would be the direct and only line between Chicago and the twin cities, St. Paul and Minneapolis. No line existed in Wisconsin between Chicago and the twin cities.

RAILROAD IMPORTANT TO MARKETS

Farmers, businessmen, and traders had traveled forty or fifty miles to the river towns to purchase many of their supplies. A railroad terminal at Calmar would settle her destiny and make Calmar a growing, thriving market place. Farmers could ship their greens easily; elevators would spring up like giants; new fangled machines could be bought and transported; and Calmar proudly would play host to such progress.

Yet calamity came to Calmar in late 1864 and early 1865 when the railroad was built through Calmar without a depot, freight station, or recognition of it as a whistle stop. What should have been Calmar's glorious conquest had gone to Conover, and Conover was deliriously dreaming of becoming a large metropolis.

DECORAH DESPERATE

If Calmar, however, were deflated, the plight of Decorah, the county seat, was even worse. Previously the county seat, ever and always alert to improve transportation facilities, had devised a bond issue to bring a railroad into the region.

Out of this talk came the Northwestern Railroad Company, with Decorah as headquarters. Business men, with a well justified faith in the future, pledged themselves to \$80,000 worth and sought the county to float a bond issue of \$100,000. The people responded, and the bonds were printed. They were ready to be issued, when the Supreme Court declared such bonding unconstitutional. The plan luckily failed and the county was saved from the burden of a debt which might have crippled it.

A SUCCESSFUL COMPANY

In January, 1863, the McGregor Western Company was organized, and to this company goes the credit for successfully laying the rails of steel. Work commenced in March, 1863, at North McGregor and, in one year, was in running order to Monona. The work was completed to Postville in September, 1864; Castalia, October 1864; and to Conover (through Calmar) in August, 1865.

Decorah promptly showed her progressive leadership by getting the manager of the Western McGregor Railroad Company to build a branch line from Calmar to Decorah, a distance of nine miles. A forty thousand dollar bonus was promised. Nearly \$18,000 was paid by the citizens of Decorah.

CALMAR BECOMES CENTER

Gradually and inevitably the mills of the gods ground away Conover's railroad facilities, and the terminal facilities were moved to Calmar. In 1868 Calmar became the eastern terminus and junction with the main line for the I & D branch of the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad. The I & D was built as far as New Hampton, and added importance and dollar value to Calmar.

By 1869 the branch line from Conover to Decorah was completed. The Conover terminal was transferred to Calmar, and Robert Jameson became the first conductor. (His beard was 11½ inches long and covered a handsome physiognomy.)

Decorah was wild with joy! A large celebration was held. Luther college, now a few years old and a thriving institution, could receive students over the rails. The stage coach was eliminated, and the county seat had rail facilities.

MISPLACED ENTHUSIASM

When Calmarites first realized that Conover was decadent, and that the railroad depot, freight house, and side tracks would come to Calmar, they exhibited their emotion in a rather ludicrous way. Men and women pitched in to help carry tracks, stack lumber, and to make themselves generally useful. It dawned on them finally that the work would have to be done whether they assisted or not; so they sheepishly stood aside.

The first roundhouse of brick and wood was built during this period. It was blown down by the great storm of 1918, and the present structure was built. Old time railroad men remember when Calmar received over thirty trains per day. Several were made up here, and the roundhouse was full of engines receiving repairs and attention. Over fifty resident families lived here on a full time basis, employed by the railroad, and many more lived part time in the hotel.

Among the many railroad characters none captured the public fancy like Mike and Mat Graf, twin brothers, who were born and reared in the old brick building which previously occupied the spot where the Opera House sets. Mike and Mat (plus two brothers, Pete and Joe) became "rails" in spite of their mother's wishes to the contrary. They were large, strong, rough men who loved to wrestle to show their physical prowess. Their matches always ended in a tie. All four worked many years for the railroad and several of them died at their post of duty. Other "rails" were: Ed O'Toole, first conductor; C. H. Bradbury, roundhouse foreman; and Mike Gilmartin, conductor, for whom a side track is named in Calmar.

The railroad has paid, and still pays, heavy and significant taxes. It has been a mighty factor in Calmar's growth. Due

to its vast consumption of water Calmar progressively built one of the leading water systems in the country. The old wooden tank came down and the modern steel giant was erected. (Even the spirits of Skotland, Landin, and Clark enjoy its view.) The old depot has long been replaced by the modern structure; and today it is in the charge of our popular Mayor, E. J. Hackett, while the capable Fred Houdek handles Railway Express.

CALMAR R. R. CAPITAL TO-DAY

Today the volume of railroad traffic, both in passengers and freight, has been curtailed, due in a large measure to modern trucking. However, Calmar still is Winneshiek County's railroad center, and as long as railroads are necessary, will continue to be the leader.



The Old Depot Hotel



The Old Depot Hotel as the hottest spot in town

CHAPTER V

Mushroom on the Meadow

Conover, three miles northwest of Calmar, was born of hope in the fall of 1864, nurtured by the railroad for nearly three years, married to Mr. Get-Rich-Quick, and was buried by the onward rush of circumstances and fate. For years after, it was slurred as "Goneover."

FROM COW PASTURE TO CITY

During the westward march a railroad was to a town as the arterial system to the body, indispensable. Conover, before September, 1864, was no more than a good cow pasture. The Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul R. R. reached it around the middle of September; and within two weeks, the village was plotted, originally with two additional land developments by Conley and Peterson.

Every farmer in the district, when he realized that the railroad was stopping in Conover and by all appearances making it a terminal, began to get his fields laid off into town lots, with bisecting streets and significant corner stones. It looked very pretty on paper with the streets and alleys dedicated to the public, duly acknowledged, and certified by the official blue or red seal.

Here, instead of Calmar, would be the market place where produce from forty miles around would be brought to be sold and shipped. No town ever sprang up more quickly with greater hopes of stability and security. Crops were excellent, money was plentiful, and plans for future greatness unlimited.

YOUNG PEOPLE DOMINATE

Come closer and walk the streets of Conover in 1865. The Civil war has just ended; and ex-soldiers, officers and privates cavort together on the streets of the new town. These are no gray heads. All are young people with life before them. They are growing up with a young town, and the sky is the limit. They could, and would, show their elders that stooped shoulders and long beards were not necessary for fortune.

32 SALOONS—TO KEEP LIFE GAY

Now walk down the main street. Count the buildings. There are over 200 of them. The workmanship is slightly slipshod, but they are buildings. There are over 32 saloons to

keep life gay and equally as many markets to handle produce. Over here is an empty lot. Surely, the best hotel in Iowa will be built there, but where are the churches? Look out now and cross the tracks—plenty of switch engines. Be careful, there goes the stage coach to poor old Decorah—poor backward thing—too bad they couldn't get a railroad! And poor dull Calmar! Better sell, and come to Conover lest you live in the suburbs. (And plenty of Calmarites did sell.)

Oh yes, that big field divided into lots! Why not buy it? Well, the lots there cost hundreds of dollars. Why not wait a while and buy a little further out?

OVER 1200 CITIZENS

Such is the growth of this village in 1865 that you either became an enthusiast or got out of town before the citizenry threw you out. By 1866 the twelve to fifteen hundred inhabitants were agitating for incorporation. So the Honorable David Noggle, agent and attorney for the petitioners, presented an appeal for full town status. County Judge G. R. Wellett, by order and examination, on October 17, 1866, so decreed that CONOVER was incorporated.

From whence came its name—a farmer?

People living in Calmar were greatly perturbed by the growth of Conover. Their reactions divided them in two camps, one convinced that nothing good could come out of Conover; the other got on the band wagon, sold their Calmar ownings, and moved to Conover.

SPORES OF DECAY

Yet the seeds of decay and destruction were ever present in Conover's mushrooming. First of all, there was a lack of essential integrity. One of the agents for the election also served as the right of way agent for the railroad. He undoubtedly knew that the railroad would not stop at Conover but be pushed further west. Nevertheless it was a good chance for him to make a killing in land and move on. The railroad moved northward, and trade began to fall off; building was stopped, partially completed, and land values began to decline.

Secondly, add to this lack of good faith, the construction of the "Decorah branch" in 1869, and Conover's decline was complete. A destructive fire burned out many of the buildings. Calmarites sneaked back to Calmar and moved buildings with them. In fact a great many buildings north of the R. R. tracks were moved from Conover to Calmar. Rapid indeed was the rot and corruption of Conover.

THE PALBEARERS

By 1870 the men who served as officers for the term of their election in 1867 were serving as pallbearers to the corps of Conover. Captain V. G. Jacobs was the first and only mayor and as such probably set a record. Colonel G. D. Pagent, Charles Sydnor, and probably Captain George Q. Gardner were among the councilmen. The record is not clear here since the originals perished in the great Conover conflagration.

It is of interest to note that there were not sufficient funds in the town treasury to pay for the election expenses. Mr. J. J. Haug, township clerk, took it upon himself to satisfy these claims and took an assignment of the accounts. Sorrowfully, when Mr. Haug opened the city treasury he found nothing; and the expenses remain unpaid to this day.

In a few months the farmers began to recrop the lots which had been designed to house the great empire city. Within four years a cow pasture had mushroomed into great promise only to shed the spores of dishonesty and disillusionment.

Railroad cars were checked in Conover until a few years ago. When the yards were closed Anna Beyer, sister of Tony Vondersitt, closed her career as the agent. She and her husband had served long and faithfully. Anna can tell you in no uncertain terms how to flag a train so it will stop.

CAPITAL OF THE GHOST CITIES

Drive up to the remains of this mournful municipality some afternoon and learn the lesson these settlers afterwards must have realized, that the gods have decreed life and sickness to the mills which are turned by the rapidly moving water. Who knows; perhaps Conover has become the capital of the ghost cities of the new frontier!

CHAPTER VI

“Bet You 25,000 Dollars”

Nearly a half century of history has now been sketched, but many political and social details must be painted on the Calmar canvas.

POLITICAL CALMAR

Politically Calmar has been traditionally a Democratic stronghold in a Republican county. This is due in part to the influx of railroad workers from 1865. In the year of 1867, under provisions of the Municipal Incorporation Act, Chapter 51, Rev. of 1860, Calmar was officially adopted as the name and became an incorporate town.

THE MAYORS

The first election was in March of 1870, and John Scott, a general store operator, was elected mayor and also re-elected in 1870. John W. Tower wore the mantle in 1872, and was followed in 1873-74 by S. V. Potter. In 1875 A. E. Manchester was elected, and was dethroned by E. Pennington.

Since that time the following men have held the mayor's office: John Scott, 1877; V. E. Strayer, 1878; Tim Ahern, 1879; V. E. Strayer, 1880; A. Dostal, 1881; C. W. Giesen, 1882; A. L. Kittlesby, 1883; T. Ahern, 1884; John B. Kaye, 1885-6; John Scott, 1887; A. McRobert, 1888, 1889 and 1890; J. S. Roome, 1891-2; H. Miller, Jr., 1893-4; E. M. Heflen, 1895-6; Geo. H. Belding, 1897-8-9; S. R. Yager, 1900-1; Jacob Meyer, 1902-3-4-5-6, resigned in 1907. Dr. J. F. Conover elected to fill the vacancy and re-elected in 1908, serving until April 1, 1910. Jacob Meyer again elected in 1910 and re-elected in 1912.

LIST OF MAYORS FROM 1912

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| 1912..... | Jacob Meyer | 1936..... | H. M. Coleman |
| 1914..... | J. F. Conover | 1937..... | W. D. Yager (acting Mayor) |
| 1916..... | J. F. Conover | 1938..... | W. D. Yager |
| 1918..... | R. J. Becker | 1939..... | K. J. Meyer (acting Mayor) |
| 1920..... | R. J. Becker | 1940..... | K. J. Meyer |
| 1922..... | R. J. Becker | 1942..... | K. J. Meyer |
| 1924..... | R. J. Becker | 1943..... | E. J. Meyer (acting Mayor) |
| 1926..... | Henry Weselmann | | K. J. Meyer to Armed Forces |
| 1928..... | J. F. Conover | 1944..... | E. J. Hackett |
| 1930..... | J. F. Conover | 1946..... | E. J. Hackett |
| 1932..... | J. F. Conover | 1948..... | E. J. Hackett |
| 1934..... | J. F. Conover | 1950..... | E. J. Hackett |

YOUNG MEN'S PARTY

Jake and Gus Meyer, Joseph Koch and a few others formed the Young Men's Party in 1894. It is still going strong—although the men are not so young. "Joe" still retains a keen interest in things democratic and political. There is also a People's Party.

The present Town Hall was erected in 1890. Faced with a problem of mud and more mud in the town square and along the streets, the powers began a sidewalk and street program. Several miles of sidewalks were built, and the rest were filled with cinders. Cinders also covered the square.

Politically Calmar was growing up and running smoothly. Calmarites were proud of their town. A thumb nail sketch of the town as it relates to their lodges, hotels, business places,



Farmer's Day — Sack races!

societies, newspapers and farms will show why the brave, boasting, beer-drinking boys of Calmar almost scared the daylights out of Decorah.

In the period from the 70's through the 90's Calmar showed a gain in population from 700 to nearly 1,100 people. Hotels were doing a terrific business from the railroad transients. The American House (located in the region of Frana's Bottling Works) was an old frame building owned by Mr. and Mrs. Rooney. Mr. Rooney was always found on the front porch full of good humor and a kind word in spite of his affliction, blindness.

EARLY HOTELS

The George House, also frame, stood on or near the spot where Halverson's garage is. The owner was an artist, and for some years she taught painting. Her "human" dog was a much-talked-about and much-admired creature. He always went to the meat market for meat and carried it neatly home. Never did he stop to investigate the package, and no other dog dared a hold up.

The Huston House, also very prominent, burned down in 1877 and was never rebuilt.

Most popular of all the hotels was the Calmar House, forerunner, of today's fine institution. It housed many a weary railroad man and was a safe haven after long runs.

EARLY LEADERS PAVE WAY FOR TODAY

Business places also showed signs of strength. Even four hotels were not enough, and a constant plea was made for someone with capital to invest; a new hotel would return big dividends, providing the person "had talent to run a hotel". The leading merchants were, John Scott, dry goods; P. Olson, dry goods and general merchandise; A. Anderson, dry goods and groceries; V. E. Strayer, hardware; F. A. Towns, drugs, medicine and stationery; J. Ridgeway, jewelry; and boots and shoes were made to order by C. C. Winger; C. W. Giesen furnished lumber. Jim Morris was also a jeweler for many years.

Dr. Abbott was turning out complete sets of masticators in his dental workshop; and Dr. J. S. Roome was beginning in 1868 to examine the heart and mouths of his patients to the satisfaction of all.

A. Dostal was one of the early justices of the peace, and John B. Kaye, attorney, who for a consideration, listened to the troubles and difficulties of those applying to him for comfort. Kaye was at his work until after the turn of the century and was followed by our present day legalists, the very capable trio, Judge T. Goheen, J. W. Neuzil and Carl Nystrom (not to slight our own Mrs. Goheen).

The grain dealers were A. Anderson and Co., P. Olson and Co., E. Jacobson, and John Ellinger. They helped to make Calmar a town of keen competition and the best grain market in northeast Iowa. They were followed by Meyer and Co., which, at that time, was one of the largest and finest in the state.



Inside of Grundeland's old shop

A dress making and millinery business was conducted by Mrs. Clinton and Mrs. Liddle. Sackett and Miller Brothers ran the livery stable (where George Buchelt's store is); H. Ellingson, Miller Giesen and Co. did the blacksmithing. S. V. Potter was the busy depot agent.

Meanwhile Calmar's lone industry, Miller, Giesen Wagon Co. was turning out bob sleighs, carriages, and one year (around 1875) made 125 wagons. William V. Yager came to Calmar from Decorah before 1880 and was with H. Miller, Jr. according to Vincent Yager who so kindly set forth this data in his letter.

Saloons were few in number, with five vying for trade and paying a license of \$100 per year. There were fewer saloons per given population in Calmar than any other place in northern Iowa.

At this time John Hammer and Umheifer ran the meat markets located near the present day Opera House. They were followed by Weselmann, who built a reputation for quality still carried on by his sons in a unique style. In 1877 a fire destroyed McMullins Drug Store, a shoe store, restaurant and saloon. Undaunted Calmar soon rebuilt these.

Early knights of strop and razor were R. Dixon and C. J. Lundgren. Edwin Peterson arrived in the 70's, and today enjoys the reputation of being the oldest active barber in the entire region.



Farmer's Day — an egg race

VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS THRIVE

Keeping pace with the growth of Calmar were the church and societies. The Free Masons were active with a membership of over 45. They met in a room above the old post office. It was well furnished and comfortable. The Lodge was of great benefit to the community. Also the Sons and Daughters of Temperance maintained a flourishing organization. They had a large and well arranged hall upstairs over the Anderson-Landis block (Friendly Tavern, later Hyatt's store). They were after the evils of alcohol and often succeeded in recruiting new members from the files of the few bars. The Knights of Pythias and Catholic Foresters also flourished.

FARMERS READJUST CROP METHODS

The farms of this period were undergoing a supreme transition from wheat raising to the long-grain formula. Many farmers went bankrupt in the 70's and 80's before it dawned on them that the profitable wheat belt had moved west into Kansas and the Dakotas. John Kochel, our present day tax assessor, remembers those days keenly when wheat no longer was "good", and even became the king of the crops. With this bridge successfully crossed, farmers in and around Calmar returned to successful and profitable methods and crop production.

CALMAR TEASES DECORAH

It is little wonder then that Calmar, ideally located with good roads, a railroad center, boasting business men and fine farms should seek to capture some political glory. First of Calmar, some of the "boys" began to brag how Calmar was going to take away the county seat from Decorah. Filled with a little bravado and plenty of good cheer, the Calmar fellows teased Decorah about the early "theft" of the court house. Decorah was accused of stealing the election (see "History of Winneshiek County" by Bailey for facts) and prejudicing the election officials. It was rumored that local officials made sure that the rider and horse carrying the ballot would fall into the stream, and with the rider and horse would come through.

All of this jesting was in the spirit of real fun and ribbing until one prankster realized that the court house in Decorah should be rebuilt. He suggested quite boldly that Calmar could build a better one.

"Let you couldn't even raise \$25,000 for a court house" was the Decorah answer.

CALMAR RAISES \$25,000

In dead earnest, around 1897 and 1898, Calmar men actually raised in pledges and cash a sum of \$25,000 to get the seat moved to Calmar. Decorah promptly got busy in her usual aggressive and admirable fashion and completed plans for maintaining the court house. History is not clear as to events, but Decorah is still the county seat. We can attribute it to her superior intelligence and ability to make a "stolen article" really pay off. More power to Decorah's example.

When Calmarites were not arguing polities or county seats, they had three great diversions—mud, dramatics, and newspapers. ("Dirt" was, of course, an important ingredient of all three.)

The streets were in terrible condition during the spring and fall! One constant theme ran through the "Calmar Herald", mud, mud, mud.

HOME TALENT PLAYS

People drove and struggled through the mire to see the Dramatic Club presentations. Plays were held in the hall of the Anderson-Landin block. Their opening night in January of 1873 found John B. Kaye in a lyrical mood. He wrote a poem for the occasion which was later included in his book of poetry.

Emma Olson recalls a play later on, entitled "Fifty Miles from Boston", which filled the hall for three nights. Proceeds from plays helped the town, especially the construction of the bandstand.

One of the favorite actors of this and the following period was Dr. Conover, dentist, mayor and banker. He had a good and ready wit. His funny Yankee twist made him a success in home talent plays.

However, the greatest diversion and relaxation came with the issuing of the weekly newspaper. There were no comics and little bold type, but they covered a multitude of problems and sins.

FIRST NEWSPAPER

In the year 1870 Calmar issued its first newspaper. It was called the "Winneshiek Representative" and was published and edited by B. T. Wood. It was continued here about a year, then moved to Ossian where it died and was buried in a morgue. Unfortunately the morgue does not contain any copies; so the paper is lost to posterity.

In 1876 on April 19th, "The Calmar Guardian" made its appearance. Fortunately and thoughtfully, Mrs. Conover saved the first issue. To catch the spirit of the day let's quote some of the interesting and illuminating articles.

We quote now its first editorial. Read it aloud to the family and note the flamboyant, prudish, victorian language.

"THE GUARDIAN," April 19, 1876 — Vol. 1, No. 1.

"EDITORIAL

"Here we are. With the first warm breath of spring—with the first carol of the robin, returning from his southern winter home to his summer residence with us denizens of the northern clime, we plume the wings of the GUARDIAN for its flight to your homes and firesides, hoping that it may ever be an humble advocate of 'Peace on earth, good will to men.'

"Reader, and we trust, friend of the enterprise we are establishing in your midst, we do not intend in this opening article to exhaust either your patience or the English language in stating our position on every question that ever has or ever will be presented to the American people. Were we to do this, it would only prove to you that we belonged to that army of time-servers, respectable only in numbers, too many representatives of which have already found their way into the editorial chairs of our state and nation.

"The times through which we are now passing are pregnant not only with great events, but with great danger to the American Republic. Dishonesty and corruption have so permeated the whole body politic, from the Administration and Congress at Washington, down to our county and township offices, that no man, unless he is endowed with second sight, can grasp at a glance the problem now being worked out in American polities. One thing is evident: our nation is now passing through one of the most trying and dangerous ordeals she has ever been called upon to encounter, and the grand result will demonstrate whether or not a republican form of government shall continue to exist in this western world.

"Politically the GUARDIAN will be Independent; supporting whatever measures its editor shall deem to be best calculated to promote the interests of the people, and especially the people of the great and growing North West. Sad experience has demonstrated the fact that **neither** of the great political parties of the day combine and embody **all** the virtues and **none** of the vices to which humanity is heir. In the past we have spent a great deal of time and some money in assisting politicians to office, because they belonged to a certain party, and not for any particular fitness or qualification they possessed above the average mortal for the position to which they aspired. For this disinterested labor we have sometimes received thanks, but we cannot remember to have received any large amount of bread and butter! We might as well remark right here that we have taken a "new departure" in

Since January 1, 1870, New York has had 261 murders--or not quite one a week.

"A Liverpool firm, the other day, divided among those of their employees who had been with them five years and upwards a sum of \$200,000.

"This year is also the dramatic Centennial. In 1576, three hundred years ago, the first theatre for those who speak and read the English language was built in London.

"Krupp, the gun maker, pays more income tax than any man in Prussia. He pays nearly 110,000 marks, which represents a yearly scale of profits exceeding 5,000,000 marks or about \$1,250,000.

"A fast young Parisian four years ago applied to a usurer for a loan of 1,000 francs, stipulating to pay 200 francs for the accommodation. The applicant drew up the following note, which was accepted: 'Paris, 20 Nov., 1872. I promise to pay 1,200 francs on the 29th of February next. Value received. J. R.' The lender did not notice the date, and has only been able to recover now."

And now all hypochondriacs please form your lines to the right. This stuff cures anything—

"Ayer's Sarsaparilla

is widely known as one of the most effectual remedies ever discovered for cleansing the system and purifying the blood. It has stood the test of years with a constantly growing reputation, based on its intrinsic virtues, and sustained by its remarkable cures. So mild as to be safe and beneficial to children, and yet so searching as to effectually purge out the great corruptions of the blood, such as the serofulous and syphilitic contamination. Impurities or diseases that have lurked in the system for years soon yield to this powerful antidote, and disappear. Hence its wonderful cures, many of which are publicly known, of SCROFULA, and all serofulous diseases, ULCERS, ERUPTIONS, and eruptive disorders of the skin, TUMORS, BLOOTCHES, BOILS, PIMPLES, PUSTULES, SORES, ST. ANTHONY'S FIRE, ROSE OR ERY-SIPELAS, TETTER, SALT RHEUM, SCALD HEAD, RING-WORM, and internal ULCERATIONS OF THE UTERUS, STOMACH, and LIVER. It also cures other complaints, to which it would not seem especially adapted, such as DROPSY, DYSPEPSIA, FITS, NEURALGIA, HEART DISEASE, FEMALE WEAKNESS, DEBILITY, and LEUCORRHOEA, when they are manifestations of the serofulous poisons.

"It is an excellent restorer of health and strength in the Spring. By renewing the appetite and vigor of the digestive organs, it dissipates the depression and listless languor of

rattle snakes, bull snakes, black snakes, blue-racers, and scores of other kinds."

If you did not like the snake story see how your digestion works on this pseudo-scientific saga.

"THE GUARDIAN

"Child Born with Full Beard and Other Singular Features.

"From the St. Joseph (Mo.) Herald

"A woman living on Main street last evening gave birth to twins, which, while but a short hour apart in age, are as distinct in their features and form as were Esau and Jacob. One is very dark haired, and the other is a chalky white. The former is what we would call a *lusus naturae*—one eye is as blue as indigo, while the other is black as coal. Its nose is hooked like a parrot's, and its ears are shaped like a wolf's. Its mouth is formed naturally enough, but two fully developed tusks protrude from the gums, giving the appearance of a boar pig. The face of this wonderful production is covered with a fuzz, forming a beard as strong as most youths of seventeen sport. The child has three hands, one of these useful appendages being double-barreled, as it were. Of course it is very small, but the formation is perfect, with fingers and nails to match. The child is bow-legged, and one foot is much larger than the other. Dr. Smith, who delivered the twins, bears testimony to the correctness of his statement, and proposes to have a general consultation of the faculty over this remarkable freak of nature."

And for you disgusted business men kindly read the following:

"Business is decidedly dull.

Ossian has reduced her saloon licenses to \$5. A little more Enterprise (?) is evidently needed in our down-the-road neighbor."

You like your humor in a Scandinavian accent--here it is!

"EKKOS" VON DECORAH.

(Special correspondence to THE GUARDIAN.)

"DECORAH. Abril-fool mondnt, der 13.

"VEL, MR. EDITOR SAM,

"Ve vas all down in dis dumps, not much bishness neider, on account of dot. A solidary farmer comed to town dis forenoon mit horse back on, and he say dot vos impossible to have comed some onder vay. Dose mans vot have got some bishness blaces in town dond got discourage. You know a motto like dis: 'Faint lady dond cood vin some fair hearts;' vel dose ve use now.

Marshal Johnson dound vas marshal now; no, he gently shlid avay las veak; he went to der land of Qvakers; he got a job on der Cendennial blace to use a 'Shelala.' Mr. Tom Veldon has tooken his blaces, und he valk dat street ofver. Tom vas a right man in a goot place.

"George Haislet's **Ventilator** papers vas gone to Dubuque to live; not go died. Ve vas sorry to loos George; he was a bully boy mit two glass eyes—black vones. His motto vas like this; Sharity for all, und don't got some malise; goot.

"H. D. Solberg is worth some money. Wellington & Villett vould like to have it, so bad, dey can shmel it. Dot vas a bully ting ven you mind odder peobles bushness first and den your own, aind it? and dots besser you live by a house, mitout any doors, of you got troubles mit volks.

"Der city calaboose is empty to-day, und subreme reigns peace around about der verduous city. Der first tramp-loafer vat got himself knocked in der gutter out, I told you right away, und efferytings bertaining to bushness like dot.

"Vel, Sam, of I dound see you any more, 'Hallo!'

Dine Freund,

KNAFF."

Now for your good housewives—read and practice.

"THE GUARDIAN, April 19, 1876—Vol. 1, No. 1.

"Domestic Economy

"COCOA COOKIES. Two cups of sugar, one of butter, two eggs, half a grated cocoanut, with flour, roll thin and bake.

MILDEWED LINEN may be restored by soaping the spots and while wet covering them with fine chalk, scraped to a powder, and well rubbed in.

LEMONS will keep good for months if sliced when sound and packed in glass jars with a thick layer of white sugar between the slices.

SOUR-MILK CAKE. One cup of sour milk, one cup of sugar, one-half cup of butter, two cups of flour, one egg, one level teaspoonful of soda, half cup of rasins chopped, and spice to taste.

TO CLEAN BLACK CASHMERE. Wash in hot suds, with a little borax in the water; rinse in blueing water—very blue—and iron while damp. It will look equal to new.

HAIR RESTORATIVE. A tea, made by pouring one pint of boiling water on two tablespoonfuls of dried rosemary leaves, with a wineglassful of rum added, is excellent.

TINCTURE of capsicum put on the fingers will cure a child from biting the nails. A friend cured her child effectually



The Sunshine Club—guess who?

of this bad habit by promising her a dollar when her nails should be long enough to cut.

TO BOIL OLD POTATOES. Peel them and let them soak in water several hours; then put them in cold water with a little salt in it; boil slowly—the slower the better. If it stops boiling they will be watery; rub through a collander.

FOR SMOOTH HANDS. After washing and drying the hands, pour into one hand a few drops of good cider vinegar; rub the hands together, wetting the whole surface both sides, and dry it. Practice this and your hands will feel smooth and pliant. Some do not like it, but it is far better than glycerine or any other ungent.

SKILL in simple cookery is one of the finest and most useful accomplishments a young lady can have. Let her graduate in the art of bread-making, taking in the whole department. Nothing conduces more to the health of a household than good bread, and every family likes a variety in this article. She has here a wide range for her ingenuity.

GOSSIP OF THE DAY.

For the discriminating reader who likes his tidbits in capsule form, observe the following:

“New York drinks \$106,000,000 a year.

Paris is to have another underground street railway. There are 11 variety theatres in New York at present.

Since January 1, 1870, New York has had 261 murders--or not quite one a week.

"A Liverpool firm, the other day, divided among those of their employees who had been with them five years and upwards a sum of \$200,000.

"This year is also the dramatic Centennial. In 1576, three hundred years ago, the first theatre for those who speak and read the English language was built in London.

"Krupp, the gun maker, pays more income tax than any man in Prussia. He pays nearly 110,000 marks, which represents a yearly scale of profits exceeding 5,000,000 marks or about \$1,250,000.

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"It is an excellent restorer of health and strength in the Spring. By renewing the appetite and vigor of the digestive organs, it dissipates the depression and listless languor of

the season. Even where no disorder appears, people feel better, and live longer, for cleansing the blood. The system moves on with renewed vigor and a new lease of life. Prepared by Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass., Practical and Analytical Chemists. SOLD BY ALL DRUGGISTS EVERYWHERE."

The Guardian was followed by The Calmar Herald. Here is their sense of humor.

"**THE CALMAR HERALD**, July 10, 1888.
"Miscellaneous Column"

HUMOR ?

"He: I love you! She: But I have not a penny in the world!
He: Ah! but you did not let me finish. I was going to say I love you not. She: Indeed! I only meant to put you to test; the fact is I have a fortune of \$60,000. He: Yes, but you again interrupted me just now. What I meant to say was: I love you not for the sake of your money! She: So glad to hear you say that! It was all a joke about the \$60,000."

They had horses in them there hills.

"**THE CALMAR HERALD**, July 17, 1888.

"M. J. Klien was up from Ossian on Monday. We had the pleasure of taking a spin around town behind his brother's handsome grey team."

And the poetry—well, read it aloud to your family before dinner.

"**THE CALMAR HERALD**, July 31, 1888.

"A 4TH OF JULY TRAGEDY

"Twas the 4th of July in the evening,
The stars shone out in the sky,
And the post office clerk was gazing,
At a maiden standing by.

And after enjoying in silence
A moment of perfect bliss,
He gave a couple of hiccoughs,
And said, 'Good evening Miss.'

The maiden returned his greeting,
And soon the couple were seen
On their way to Pete Meyers,
To test his delicious ice cream.

While they ate the cold, cold cream,
And sucked lemon through a straw,
The band outside were playing
Sweet as the sound of a buzz saw.

While listening to the inspiring music
He told her of his love,
A love unchangeable
As the God in heaven above.

He compared it to the ocean,
Stretching from pole to pole,
And said, 'if you pump out the water
My love would fill up the hole.'

The maiden listened in silence,
Then said, 'It is growing late,
You may accompany me home,
But go no farther than the gate.'

Never was walking more pleasant;
Never was his heart more gay,
And never did his arm steal round
One's waist in such an innocent way.

'If you could always be with me,
As through this world we jog,
My life would be one sweet song.
I would be happy as a pollywog.'

At last they reached her father's gate.
The hour had come to part.
He was thinking of embracing her—
Of pressing her to his heart,

When a figure arose in the moonlight.
Then came a thud—a terrible sound.
The clerk went flying through the air
And lit in a heap on the ground.

He never knew what struck him.
* * * Here we will draw the veil,
But if her father's boot could talk
It would tell an awful tale.

LEMONADE JIM."

For the benefit of all farmers—let's rally around the corn and hogs.

"THE CALMAR HERALD, August 21, 1888.

"THE FARMER FEEDETH ALL.

"Charles G. Leland

"My lord rides through his palace gate,
My lady sweeps along in state,
The sage thinks long on many a thing,
And the maiden muses on marrying;
The minstrel harpeth merrily,
The sailor ploughs the foaming sea,
The huntsman kills the good red deer
And the soldier wars without a fear,
But fall to each whate'er befall,
The farmer he must feed them all.

Smith hammereth merrily the sword,
Priest preacheth pure and holy word,
Dame Alice worketh 'broidery well,
Clerk Richard tales of love can tell,
The tap-wife sells her foaming beer,
Dan Fisher fisheth in the mere,
While pages bring the Gascon wine,
But fall to each whate'er befall,
The farmer he must feed them all.

Man builds his castles fair and high,
Whatever river runneth by,
Great cities raise in every land,
Great churches show the builder's hand,
Great arches, monuments and towers,
Fair palaces and pleasing bowers,
And well man worketh everywhere,
Great work is done, be't here or there,
But work or rest, whate'er befall,
The farmer he must feed them all."

Two items which merit space—an unusual one—and another from a great humorist.

"THE CALMAR HERALD, July 31, 1888.

One or two cases of leprosy are reported in Marshall county.

I hav finally cum to the kumclusion that if I kan't prove a thing without bettin' 5 dollars on it, the thing has got a dredphull weak spot some where.—Josh Billings."

The Calmar Courier followed the lusty precedent of the Herald. It had a long and useful life under the direction of the Simon Yager family. Copies may be found at Luther College. Here are the baseball scores for all the sport fans, just to show its cosmopolitan makeup.

"CALMAR COURIER," June 19, 1896.

National League Standing

Following is the standing of the clubs in the National Baseball League:

| | W | L | | W | L |
|------------|----|----|--------------|----|----|
| Cleveland | 26 | 16 | Philadelphia | 28 | 21 |
| Baltimore | 28 | 18 | Pittsburg | 23 | 22 |
| Cincinnati | 29 | 20 | Chicago | 25 | 24 |
| Boston | 25 | 19 | New York | 20 | 27 |
| Washington | 24 | 20 | St. Louis | 13 | 32 |
| Brooklyn | 25 | 22 | Louisville | 10 | 35 |

Standing of Western League

Following is the standing of the clubs in the Western League:

| | W | L | | W | L |
|--------------|----|----|--------------|----|----|
| Indianapolis | 25 | 14 | St. Paul | 21 | 21 |
| Detroit | 25 | 16 | Milwaukee | 23 | 25 |
| Kansas City | 24 | 20 | Columbus | 17 | 30 |
| Minneapolis | 24 | 20 | Grand Rapids | 16 | 30 |

And now for that picture beautiful for your one and only. Here's how grandma did it. (and got her man).

"GOSSIP FOR THE FAIR SEX

Points on Being Photographed

"These points on being photographed will be seasonable for the 'girl graduates.'

A feather boa or lace fichu has a wonderfully softening effect on the features.

It is unwise to wear a new dress. It always falls in awkward folds.

Generally speaking, the head and shoulders make a far prettier picture than a full-length portrait.

Unless there is any urgent need for it, it is a great mistake to be photographed if you are out of health or in low spirits."

PART THREE

1898 to 1918 . . . more or less

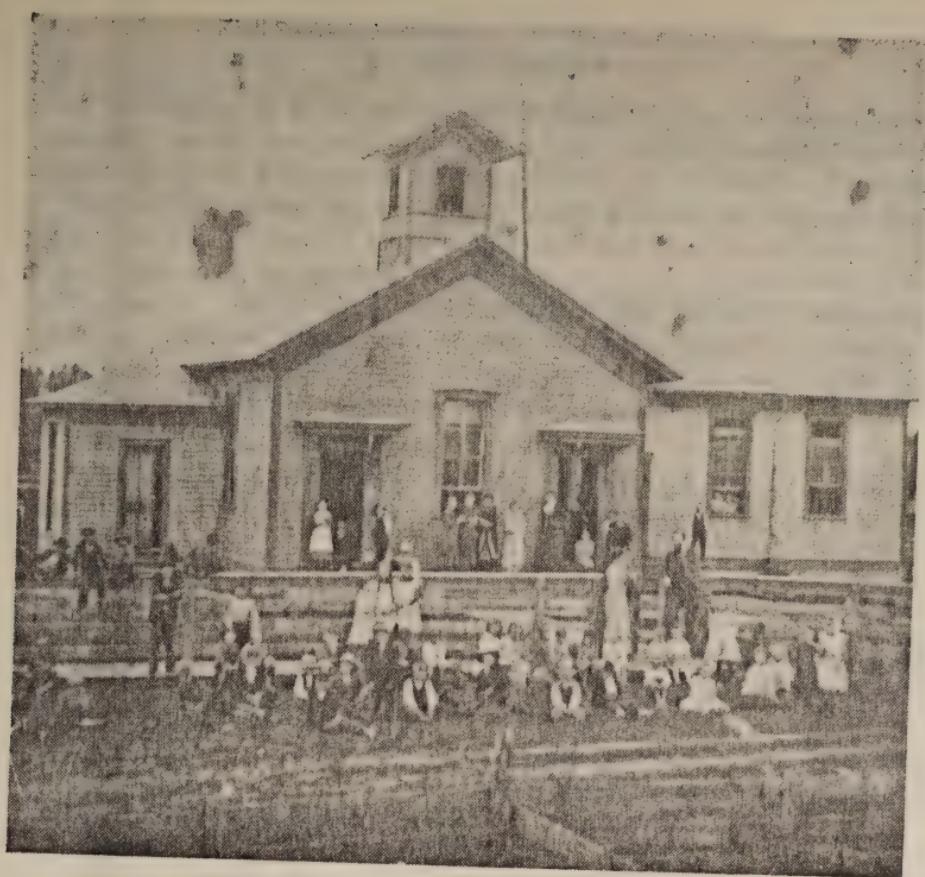


*The Gods Declare
Coming Events Cast
Their Shadows*



Chapters

- VII DIPHTHERIA, DEMAGOGUES AND DRIVEL
- VIII SKETCHES OF SAINTS IN SHADOWS
- IX THE COMIMG OF AN IRISHMAN



Calmar's First School Building



The Public School built in 1898

CONVERSATION NUMBER THREE AT MID-NIGHT

It's strange how many people believe in the existence of a spiritual world but will not admit it. I was having trouble admitting that I believed in the spirits of Calmar's pioneers.

So a few weeks ago at about 2:00 o'clock in the morning while the "Boss" and I were working away on Calmar's history, I felt strangely compelled to walk over to the water tower. My "informants" were busy discussing their favorite subject—Calmar. I edged closer so I would not miss their conversation.

Clark—“Brother, what an age we're moving into. The old century's gone, and the 20th century's here.”

Landin—“That's for sure.”

Skotland—“All change is not progress. We are moving faster, but our characters and corporeal works of mercy are lagging.”

Clark—“I understand that Duryea has driven a horseless carriage at the unbelievable speed of eight miles per hour.”

Landin—“Don't believe it! You can bet that nothing will ever replace the horse. These cars will never work; people'll die going so fast that they can't breathe. That's for sure!”

Skotland—“Man's brain is developing at an astounding rate. Yet he's using his intelligence to destroy himself and develop more efficient fighting tools.”

Landin—“Yeah—you bet.”

Clark—“Old Teddy Roosevelt certainly showed them at San Juan, and as president he'll never be forgotten.”

Skotland—“The man's got character—great reformer—need more like him.”

Clark—“Think he'll outlaw the airplane that the Wright Brothers have invented?”

Skotland—“Don't know, but there's plenty of crime and drunkenness and smoking of those new fangled white things filled with tobacco that he should pass a law against.”

Clark—“I saw a woman smoking a cigarette in a saloon. They cost five cents a pack. Waste of good money. Give me a pipe.”

Landin—“Bet you could burn your whiskers with one of those things.”

At that moment I stifled a cough. Landin muttered, “That nosey Easterner again.” There were three splashes in the tank. I walked back to the Opera House, disgusted with spirits, self, and standpipes.

CHAPTER VII

Diphtheria, Demagogues and Drivel

Diphtheria closed the Calmar school in 1903, but it could not stop the forward march of education. Before 1875 education was a limited commodity in Calmar. It existed in a one room school as a sub district of the Calmar Township. Although Calmar became an independent organization on April 3, 1875, the school remained small with one teacher for a ten month term.

By 1877 growth had demanded an addition. It was built for \$575.00 by Lars O. Moen.

TUITION — DOLLAR PER MONTH

In 1879 education was on a commercial basis. Tuition was a dollar per month. Two teachers were employed and more added during the rushed months of winter. The principal had the privilege of paying the janitor out of his own salary. Students had to present a certificate of vaccination in order to be admitted. Illness, especially diphtheria and chicken pox, were paramount problems.

By 1884 a 24' x 60' addition was built by Mathias Romberg for \$1400. There were now three teachers employed. In 1852 they received the following salaries: Principal, \$65 per month; Intermediate, \$35; Primary, \$35.

FEMALES VOTE FOR NEW SCHOOL

During the Spanish-American War a petition submitted by forty-one voters asked the board to build a new schoolhouse. One hundred and sixty-three votes were favorable against nine negatives. Females also voted, adding forty-seven more to the majority. (Nice of the men to let the women vote!) E. O. Flaskerud and David Beinegen built the large Victorian building on the same land that the school occupies today. It cost \$9,200. The old rambling building was made into two or three houses. F. C. Clark was the principal. The building had one room in the southeast corner unused as a class room. It was designated as a gymnasium, and so Calmar was up to date.

The year 1908 marks the beginning of the first four year high school course. H. C. Miller was the principal at this period. The five other teachers (three in the High School and three in the Grammar School) were: Olga Otis, assistant principal; Pearl Jack, seventh and eighth; Clara Anfinson,

fifth and sixth; Amelia Turkey, third and fourth; and Lillian Walford, first and second.

Before the establishment of a four-year high school, there was a two-year course. Also, at one interval, there was a three-year course. There were no four-year high school graduates from Calmar until the year 1911.

CLASSICAL CURRICULUM COMPOUNDED

In 1910 the following course of study was adopted:

First Year

First Semester

Composition (classics)
Algebra
English History
Physical Geography

Second Semester

Composition
Algebra
Commercial Arithmetic
Bookkeeping

Second Year

First Semester

Rhetoric (classics)
Algebra
Latin
American History

Second Semester

Rhetoric
Plane Geometry
Latin
Botany

Third Year

First Semester

American History (classics)
Plane Geometry
General History
German
Latin

Second Semester

American Literature
Solid Geometry
General History
German
Latin

Fourth Year

First Semester

English Literature
Physics
Civics
German
Advanced Arithmetic

Second Semester

English Literature
Physics
Political Economy
German
Advanced Grammar

The building constructed in 1898 was well ventilated but shortly became inadequate for the town's need. There were times when the Public School Board rented the Norwegian schoolhouse, later moved and (changed into the residence of Mrs. Peter Graf) for public school purpose to accommodate the overflow crowd. The record also shows that the public school was rented to the Catholics for parochial school activities after the public school term ended, that is, during the summer months.

With the passing of time the little white school north of town, (on Route 52), where Deana Winger had taught, was closed and the students came to Calmar.

J. C. IVERSON ARRIVES

In 1932 an event happened which changed the complexion of the school system. The Board selected and hired the most capable of superintendents, J. C. Iverson. He had an excellent background. Born in 1901 in Terrill, Iowa, he had graduated from preparatory school and Luther and done post graduate work at Iowa. Under his constant supervision and inspiration, the present new building was constructed in 1936 at a cost of \$83,000 during an interim from April 23rd to October 19th. Following is a copy of the dedication program:

DEDICATION
of the
CALMAR PUBLIC SCHOOL
Saturday, December 19, 1936
PUBLIC SCHOOL AUDITORIUM
8:00 o'clock P. M.

PROGRAM

| | |
|---|---|
| Invocation..... | Rev. H. A. Preus |
| Introductions | Dr. F. A. Hennessy |
| Vocal Solo (Trail's End)..... | Opal Becker Accompanied by Mrs. Laura Greenman |
| Address..... | Paul C. Packer Dean, College of Education, Iowa University |
| Remarks..... | Hon. Fred Biermann |
| Remarks..... | Charles Altfilisch |
| Remarks..... | Judge T. H. Goheen |
| Remarks: (General Contractor)..... | Robt. W. Scott |
| Remarks..... | Mayor H. M. Coleman |
| Remarks: (Heating and Plumbing Contractor)..... | Geo. Johnson |

INSPECTION OF THE BUILDING
BOARD OF EDUCATION

| | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| President..... | Dr. F. A. Hennessy |
| Secretary..... | I. B. Bjonerud |
| Treasurer..... | Dr. J. F. Conover |

DIRECTORS

Ed. Hackett W. W. Hazelton George Halverson Carl Nystrom



The present Public School

BUILDING OFFICIALS AND CONTRACTORS

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Architect..... | Charles Altfillisch, Decorah, Iowa |
| Gossman & Moore, Mechanical and Electrical Engineers..... | St. Paul, Minn. |
| P. W. A. Engineer..... | E. E. Spelman |
| Robt. W. Scott & Co., General Contractors..... | Albert Lea, Minn. |
| Peter Johnson & Sons, Plumbing and Heating..... | Decorah, Iowa |
| Metcalf Electric Company, Electric Engineers..... | Anamosa, Iowa |
| Building Superintendent..... | T. M. Kelly |

Before the new building there were no extra curricular activities except baseball. Basketball was played in the hall above Meyer's Grocery until the new gym was ready.

Vocational agriculture was first introduced under Donald Hanson in 1939. It was dropped for several years and resumed in 1944. Homemaking courses were offered in 1939 under Dorothy Krolik.

The Commercial department was added 1937-1938.

Music was somewhat limited. Rube Bills gave private lessons in instrumental music. Edward Ellikson organized the band in 1943.

Under Superintendent Iverson's leadership, the staff has expanded from eight to thirteen teachers and offers the following work:

- 1.) College preparatory curriculum
- 2.) Commercial curriculum
- 3.) Vocational agriculture

In addition the following wide range of pursuits: band, vocal music, football, baseball, basketball (girls and boys), dramatics, and publications.

ENROLLMENT AND FACULTY

For the first time in the history of the High School the enrollment exceeds one hundred with 113 enrolled. The elementary enrollment is 95. The present faculty is as follows:

J. C. Iverson, Superintendent

Margaret Balik, High School Principal and Band

Spencer Williams, Vocational, Agriculture

Darlys Diekman, Commercial

Elaine Hehmke, Homemaking

Jack Edling, Social Science and Coach

Dale Hiedeman, Mathematics and Science

Marcia Drake, English and Dramatics

Mrs. K. Bey, Science, Girls Physical Training, and Art

Viola Ludwig, Seventh and Eighth Grades

Margaret Becker, Fifth and Sixth Grades

Evelyn Rolfs, Third and Fourth Grades

Dorisgene Doerr, First and Second Grades and Library

It must be said that the institution is but the shadow of the leader. Mr. Iverson has built one of the most outstanding small town schools and organized a splendid staff, because he has been, and is, a tactful and energetic leader. Miss Balik represents the fine devotion of his teachers with the capable administration of many duties. If every area of Calmar life had the leadership our schools have had, Calmar would be the Cinderella City of the Middle West.

CITY LEADERSHIP CHANGES

While the century pivoted, however, Calmar had not only an acceptable school system but a spirit of destiny. In spite of the failure to obtain the county seat, (the good natured squabbling went on for a while), the local leaders were working in the interests of the town. The nucleus of this leadership were the following: John B. Kaye, attorney; Potter, depot agent; P. Olson, merchandise; G. Giesen, lumber; V. Strayer, hardware; and T. W. Hazelton, roundhouse foreman. They were mayors, councilmen, and presidents of school boards. Gradually other men like Jacob Meyer, Carl Meyer, O. P. Ode, Dr. F. A. Hennessy, Henry Giesen, and Henry Weselmann came on the scene. Walt Strayer continued as the popular tavern owner (where Rudy Wentholt is now).

Of the early nucleus John B. Kaye stood out as a quiet, slow moving, deep thinker. Able to write well, he had to his credit three books, one of which dealt with the trial of Christ. His wife was a strong Methodist worker, but in later life she followed the Adventist faith after a series of tent revival meetings held in the vacant lot now occupied by Paul Hove's house. Nearly all the early history of Calmar which is available was written by this man of vision and imagination. He was indeed a spiritual giant.

Kaye built the house where Ralph Weselmann lives. It was always an open haven to people in distress. Although he was part of the "gang", he did little fishing or hunting with Olson, Giesen, and Strayer who were always lovers of the out-of-doors.

Gradually, as this group passed on, sons and newcomers stepped into their shoes. R. J. Becker, uncle of Greg Becker, was real estate man who became mayor of the town. Henry Giesen, short, heavy set, (like his popular son, Phil), ran a grocery store for years and also a meat market. He was always jolly and full of fun, and children flocked around him, not only for candy, but because he sincerely loved them.

Jacob Meyer was also an outstanding leader, whose might and message are still felt. He was a mayor and a celebrated postmaster. In 1878 he started the firm of Meyer and Dostal. They handled general merchandise. Then with vision and fortitude, he built the huge grain elevators.

The following year the firm was dissolved. Dostal took over merchandise and Jacob Meyer, the grain, seeds, and live stock. In 1913 he sold a part interest to his son, G. A. Meyer; and in 1917 his son purchased the remaining share of the business.

Previously, Jacob Meyer had settled in Spillville in 1866 at the age of 21 where he worked with J. J. Haug. He was at home with his Swiss friends, since he had been born in Zurich. He possessed the rare ability to save money and learn quickly, so he soon acquired a half interest in the store. In 1878 he sold his share and came to Calmar.

Changing conditions have eliminated the necessity for the towering grain elevators, but they stand as a monument to a man of vision. Farmers now feed most of their grain to better economic advantage, and so the elevators and warehouse storing facilities are used in connection with jobbing and wholesale trade. This has amounted to more than a half million dollars in a given year.

Gus Meyer, Jacob's son, was well known and liked. He was an outstanding stock buyer and leader. He was a strong politician and on several occasions ran for Congress.

Another well known figure was Edwin Peterson, barber, farmer, livery magnate, car shop inspector, plumber and now still going strong as the oldest barber in this area. He is a pleasant gentleman to talk with and knows Calmar like a book. "Ed" used to walk 5 miles to go to school in the old Norwegian schoolhouse. He preferred walking to riding in the jolting, springless, steel tired wagons which jostled one to pieces. He recalls the old depot Hotel (where the depot now stands) and the raging fire which devoured it--so hot were the flames that the steel rails were melted. The pastry cook was so concerned about his pies that he threw them out the window only to have them smack the firemen in the faces. Perhaps the hotel would not have been a total loss if the officials had not decided to empty the water tank and so there was no water available. Ed used to run a barber shop above Phil's cafe and remembers when a saloon and barber shop set in the lot now occupied by the theater. Roman Rausch has heard so much history from Ed that he has become Calmar's historian, *ex officio*.

Another family shedding great influence was the Olson family. Emma S. Olson, the daughter, is mentioned often in this volume, as she has absorbed more Calmar lore than any native. Mr. Olson was a leading merchant for more than a generation and served the town well in many capacities. His name has been mentioned often in this account. He is credited, in spite of his misfortune, with a great deal of mental acumen.

THE OPERA HOUSE

The Anton Frana family has roots going deeply into Calmar soil. Out of this very large family have come many business enterprises of great significance. The bottling company rejuvenated by Frank is discussed in Chapter X. We are concerned now with the Opera House. At one time the entire section above Iowa State Bank and Meyer's Store and Liquor Store was used as the old Opera House. It was quaint, but in the heart of Anton Frana and his son, Louis, and in the minds of many of his colleagues, there existed a dream of a fine modern brick building. Dan Novak recalls this period well and was equally enthusiastic. The Frana Opera House, when built in 1916, was the leading showplace of its kind in the small towns of Iowa. It contained stage, dressing room, cloak halls, dancing hall, orchestra pit, auditorium and balcony, two apartments, and a store. Built from the finest materials, it cost over \$40,000 (replacement value today is \$105,000), and the expert workmanship is still apparent as the building is in excellent condition.

The following is a partial summary of the first program offered in the Frana Opera House on March 23, 1916:

FRANA OPERA HOUSE

Louis Frana, Proprietor

ARCHITECT

Harry E. Netcott, Independence, Iowa

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

M. M. Moen, Calmar

MILLWORK AND COPPER FRONT

Calmar Manufacturing Company, Calmar

PLUMBING AND HEATING

J. D. Becker, Calmar

ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Alexander & Johnson, Waterloo, Iowa

STAGE EQUIPMENT

Sosman & Landis Company, Chicago

SEATING

American Seating Company, Chicago

PIANO

R. J. Becker, Calmar

Sidney R. Ellis presents the Golden Voiced Singer

AL H. WILSON

in a New Periodic Comedy Song Play in three acts

“AS YEARS ROLL ON”

Written by Herbert Hall Winslow and Charles Horwitz

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I. - Van Zam's Home in Holland - The Conscription.

ACT. II. - Van Zam's Home in New York - The Cloud.

ACT. III. - Van Zam's Home in New York - The Sunshine.

During the action of the play Mr. Wilson will sing the following songs composed by himself:

“Yesterday,” “Mother Mine,” “As Years Roll On,” “She Left Me for a Teddy Bear,” “My Old Pipe,” and several piano selections.

EXECUTIVE STAFF

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Edward Everett..... | Advance Representative |
| William Fields..... | Treasurer |
| Ernest Gargano..... | Musical Director |
| Joseph Errico..... | Stage Carpenter |
| George Leonard..... | Electrician |
| Harry Wilkie..... | Master of Properties |
| Joseph Wright..... | Stage Manager |

Louis Frana guided the Opera House through the decline of vaudeville and the coming of silent movies. (Silent movies were first shown in Calmar by Alexander who had a "flicker" machine in the building now occupied by Havel.) He competed well against other markets, and during the turn of the '30's brought the "talkies" to the "Olympic Theater". In 1944 Mr. Frana sold it to John B. La Due, Jr., a genius showman, who proceeded to widen the range and drawing area of the Calmar Theater. Many improvements were made and Calmar became known as a "movietown".

While Frana was bringing entertainment, another gentleman was designing and tailoring men's clothes, so they would be well groomed for the opera. Andrew Grundeland was in the tailoring business for over fifty years, supplying the best in hand made suits for \$25.00 to \$75.00 each. At times he employed up to five and six men.

Mr. Grundeland came to Calmar when he was eight years old. At that time there were only a few houses in town. As



Can you identify these old timers in front of Andrew Grundeland's Tailor Shop

he looked out of his kitchen window in the direction of Wesemanns' and Seversons', he recalled a sink hole in that spot where he used to go swimming. Now 91 years old, he has many pleasant memories of Calmar. Mrs. Grundeland came to Calmar by the old railroad in 1882.

Space limits the biographical titbits of more of the honored people of this transitional period. If all the mail postmarked in Calmar for these early leaders could be read by the magic of x-ray imagination, what stories could be written (and many left unwritten)! Speaking of mail, however, should bring us to the development of the post office.

POST OFFICE MOVES FREELY

As already indicated, the first post office was in Alfred Clark's and Peter Clawson's store before the town was called Calmar. No postmarks existed during the period when the village was designated as "Marysville". Later the post office was in Scott's store (where Gamble's Store is now). Old Scott was not too pleasant and shooed all kids out of his store. The exact chronology is not known; but the "Old Stone House" known as Stanberg's or Grindy's (Mr. Stanberg was the second postmaster) where Bucheits' parking lot is now, housed the post office for many years. The Stanberg and Ole Grindy families were in charge.

It is of interest here to note that Alfred Clark must have died during his turn as the first postmaster. Mrs. Frank Uher has received from Mrs. Barry Gilbert of Evanston, Illinois, the original certificate of appointment issued by Horatio King, Postmaster General. The credentials refer to the "late Alfred Clark." He died at 35 years of age leaving a widow and four children. The widow later married an uncle of Caroline Grundeland. By 1856 Porter Stanberg (spelled "Sternberg" on certificate) became postmaster. In 1862 mail route No. 11003 from Monona to Calmar brought mail in and out once per week.

For a period it moved about and was located temporarily above Meyer's Grocery Store. For a while it was located where Havel heating and plumbing shop is. Later a frame building was constructed, and this was in use until the construction of the modern brick building in 1911-1912. Under "Tony" Huber's excellent direction the post office has grown into second class with prompt and courteous service.

THE CRIMES OF CALMAR

Interestingly enough, there have been few crimes in Calmar's century. The post office was robbed twice, once in 1903 when the burglars got \$300-500. The second robbery in 1912 netted \$ 75,000. You can well imagine the screaming



An old historical landmark, The Grindy house, which at one time housed the Post Office

headlines and lengthy articles the papers carried on such a crime. One paper carried exactly two lines, "The Calmar post office was robbed last night." (Louis Wangsness maintains the \$75,000 figure incorrect. "Never that much in post office.")

Jails were not too important to the "calm" and peaceful residents of Calmar although in 1912 Iowa was considered a "criminal resort" with 74 convicts at large. The railroad transients caused most of the trouble. The first jail stood about where Idor Bjonerud's house is now. It is now a utilities building of Tony Vondersitt's. The records reveal few wife beaters or bootleggers. There were some thieves and robbers and the railroad was generally the prime object. Sheriffs sometimes had to foreclose upon some poor unfortunate tenant. One fellow was fined a dime for incorrect parking. Drunkenness and disorderly conduct brought fines from 25¢ to \$50.00. Wonder how Fred Gilson and Frank Uher would have liked the villains and jails of this period?

CORN COB PIPE FACTORY

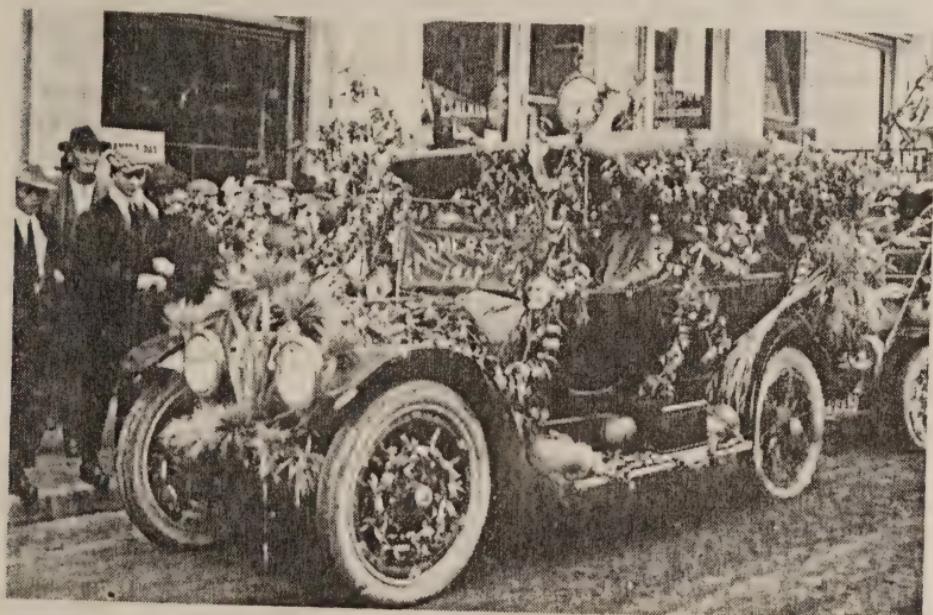
Other changes were taking place in Calmar. In addition to the growing Miller Wagon Co. and the Calmar Manufacturing Co. and the hotel expansion, all businesses were gradually changing, not only owners, but utilities. The old gas plant was not needed with the introduction of electricity. Wells had long since disappeared, and many establishments

had running water. Bathtubs were considered legal in Iowa, and people were installing them. A corn cob pipe factory had a meager existence where Rausch's new garage now stands. The Calmar Hotel swallowed up the pit hole where kids used to swim. Gus Anderson, who is the oldest living native born citizen, remembers well the old clay and brick factory north of the hotel. He delighted most in the swimming hole.

Social changes were taking place. Women put maccasare oil in their hair; the hoopskirts era was over, and in came fancy embroidered, full bustle skirts. Corsets were drawn to a millioneth of an inch, and women rushed home to shed them. Prince Albert coats with silk hats set off the fashionable elite. There weren't many in Calmar. Getting drunk at the local tavern on Saturday night was the acceptable custom.

THE FIRST AUTO

The first automobile made its appearance in Calmar, and nearly all assigned it to the workings of the devil. It was owned by Tom Pierce who owned the hotel and made a lot of money. In fact he made so much that the town fathers decided he had too much and told him to sell or they'd build a better competing one. Tom, who had decided his original 15c had grown enough, sold and rode out in his new Hupmobile (?) with thousands. The second car in town was owned by Edwin Peterson, the barber. It was a high wheel Oldsmobile and cost \$900.00. It was a beauty. He kept it for a year and a half and then sold it.



Farmer's Day — the latest model horseless carriage

People in Calmar were singing, "In the Good Old Summertime", "Wait 'Till the Sun Shines, Nellie", and "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree". Teddy Roosevelt wielded his big stick and had dinner in public with a negro, Booker T. Washington. By 1910 the first Lincoln head penny appeared in Calmar, and shortly thereafter Mrs. Yager, who is listed in "Who's Who", helped to organize the Scout movement. Irving Berlin wrote "Alexander's Ragtime Band", and the world was ready to march to war. Ford rolled off his assembly line his one millionth "Tin Lizzie" by 1914. There were plenty of them in Calmar; and the horse, for the first time, began to take the back seat.

MAKE THE WORLD SAFE — for what?

Calmar boys began to sing "Tipperary" and "Over There" as they marched to war. Here is a partial list of such men: Adolph O. Funke, Gustave W. Hewser, Alfred Johnson, Chas. Uher, Chas. I. Krumm, Geo. W. Harms, Nels O. Thompson, Harry D. Yager, Frank J. Marron, Jesse G. Tufley, Chas. G. Humpal, A. J. Rosenbaum, L. A. Sobolik, Herb. R. Wheatman, Edw. A. Hosting, Alf. T. Schneberger, Alb. J. Kuhn, Fr. W. Elsbernd, John F. Rosenbaum, Mes. A. Orke, Walter H. Hoffbaur, Jos. W. Kinkor, M. Halverson, O. A. Meaden, Elmer E. Numedahl, Mike G. Herold, Walter H. Hoffbaur, Edward D. Luzum, M. Keil, Jos. Vopava, Jos. J. Martinek, Stephen Hruska, Gerhard E. Borlaug, Jos. A. Valenta, Garrett H. Bushman, Louis Sibley, Jno. C. Hosting, Anthony Huber, Alb. A. Hycek, James R. Jarosh, Frank P. Riha, E. T. Wangness, M. Sandager, A. J. Pecinovsky, Vic. C. Valenta, Fred C. Winn, Robt. M. Bjonerud, Jno. J. Stenseth, Jerome H. Huinker, Wm. Halverson, Louis Hopperstad, M. Twedt, B. Dyrland, Herbert A. Moe, Walter D. Yager, and Wm. Stenseth.

Socially many clubs were forming in Calmar. Among them were the Sunshine Club which was organized in 1910; Elite Club, organized in 1907 for the women card parties; Whist Club, organized in 1908 for married couples. These were predated by the Spinster Club in 1900. They were the clever SOPH's or "Still On Papa's Hands" and the old maids had a barrel of fun.

THE STUDY CLUB

Prominent among the organizations was the Study Club. Its history has been well preserved by a group of ladies who have done much for Calmar culture. Here is their history as prepared by their historian for a gathering of such clubs.

"We appreciate the opportunity of presenting our Club History. A good way to remember one's age is to celebrate anniversaries; but since our club neglected to do this, we did

not realize how long we had been in this club partnership, until we were called upon to give our Club history. So in a way it has helped us to find ourselves.

"Our literary club was organized in 1909, State Federated in 1910, Nationally Federated in 1920. The originators of the Club were Mrs. H. E. Miller, Mrs. J. S. Roome, Miss Emma Olson, and a group of friends. We agree it would be fun to get together at club meetings, and surely we would be learning something.

There were fourteen charter members of our club, namely: Mrs. H. E. Miller, Mrs. Gilmartin, Mrs. Colter, Miss Millward, Mrs. Roome, Mrs. Klein, Miss Bertha Miller, Miss Matilda Meyer, Mrs. Collins, Mrs. Gilmore, Miss Carrie Miller, Mrs. W. Yager, Mrs. Hoiness, and Miss Emma Olson.

The name chosen for our Club was 'Bay View Study Club'. This, however, was shortly changed to 'Calmar Study Club'. The 'Bay View Magazine' was used as part material for programs the first year, with a review of U. S. History and Robert's Rules of Order lessons.

For our Club colors we chose green and white, our flower - carnation, and our motto - 'Learn to live, live to learn'. Our meetings were held every alternate Monday from 2 to 5 P. M. A number of years later, however, the time was changed to 8 to 10 evenings, so that our husbands could look after the children while we were at club.

Topics for study have been foreign countries and their people, noted men and women, authors, scientists, musicians, artists and world famous paintings, book reviews, the drama, the theater, our own country, citizenship, Americanism, legislation, industries, architecture, home decoration and sanitation, dietetics, hygiene, and others.

We are grateful for the loan of books and magazines by state libraries, including Decorah Library. Seldom do we need to call upon National Headquarters for material, and we do appreciate the friendly helpfulness of our county, district, and state officers. We enjoy the county and district meetings. On several occasions we have acted as hostess club to the county meetings. A number of us have attended as delegate the National Convention in Des Moines. Mrs. Brunt of Decorah came over for a social meeting and gave an interesting talk on her trip as a delegate to a National Convention in Cincinnati.

We were entertained by the Monday Club at an elaborate luncheon at the Whitney home in Decorah. By way of outside interest we have had informative talks at our club meetings given by prominent men of our town and county. Reports have been made by members of our club on their travels in Europe, Northern Pacific States, California, Texas, The

Evangeline Country, The South, New York, Washington, D.C. and Boston.

In our club membership there is no age limit. One of our most helpful members was past seventy. She had previously been a club worker in Colorado. Our younger members are interested, good workers. In addition to homekeeper members, we have had several piano instructors and vocalists, painting instructors, an attorney, registered nurses, and a number of school teachers. Two of our members have held office as County Chairman.

We contributed to Federation Calls. Yearly we have donated to some charitable institution, such as, orphanages, homes for the aged, children's hospitals. Our club sponsored a drive for clothing for Near East Relief, and for two years we supported a Belgian orphan. The largest donation outside of war relief was fifty dollars to a Christian Orphanage in Council Bluffs. A number of years we voted ten dollars per year for the purchase of hose, caps, mitts, and other articles of clothing for a Christmas box sent to some Iowa orphanage.

In our home town we helped the needy from time to time, sponsored a movie to defray expense of a tutor for one of our worthy boys, and sponsored lessons in dietetics given by a Home Demonstration agent from Ames.

During our club year we enjoyed several social evenings. We have our original club song which we sing on special occasions. At present we have a member who writes original short stories.

Two charter members, Mrs. Klein and Mrs. Hoiness, are still active members. We are proud of being members of the Great Federation of Women's Clubs, and we have, indeed, profited thereby. We enjoy our club work, and we still do learn."

CAMP RAMLAC — RUSTIC STYLE

During this era Calmarites were having a wonderful time at Camp Ramlac. Here is the story as provided by Mollie Severson through Mrs. Harry Shipton.

"Last Sunday we had the pleasure of visiting camp Ramlac, where a number of our Calmarites are enjoying an outing. The camp is located on the beautiful camp grounds on the Fisher farm, in the bend of the mill-dam, just above Spillville.

"The camp was named Ramlac, Calmar spelled backwards. The people that make up the camp, however are not backward in welcoming visitors. We were greeted right cordially and invited to stay for supper, and made to feel at home at once.

"The campers were initiated by a good rain the first

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night, so they feel that they are prepared for the worst. The only thing that struck us as not quite right was that they were too comfortably fixed to have it seem like real camp life.

"A board shanty was put up for a kitchen which is fitted out with a gasoline stove where the cooking and baking is done, with Amelia Jacobson as chief cook. Another little shanty serves as a pantry; near by a commodious dining tent, a large canvas serving as a roof, enclosed at the sides by mosquito netting, in this is a long dining table made with boards on tressels with boards for benches. A little farther on is 'Widow's Tent' where the married women repose. Next you come to 'Old Maid's Delight' where the sweet maiden hangs out at night. Then you move on and come to 'Job's Lot', a tent occupied by married and single men. A short distance from this is 'Nix' and last in the row, 'Avalon', both of which are occupied by young men of the camping party.

MOM AND POP PLAYED JOKES, TOO

"The tents are provided with cots and bedsteads and an abundant supply of bedding to make the occupants comfortable at night. A view of the camp presents to you indeed a picturesque scene. The campers seem to get a huge amount of enjoyment.

"One of the party told us that the only drawback was that they did not get enough sleep. What one won't think of to make the nights hideous another will. The ladies started the sport of sneaking a lot of truck into the boys cots, sewing the sleeves of their night shirts, etc. They were retaliated on by the boys tearing their tent down onto them the next night. Expecting the girls to take revenge the next night, the boys prepared some burnt cork and lay quietly in their tent awaiting developments; suddenly their tent came down on them. The girls were promptly caught and some of the above mentioned face powder applied for their complexion, and they were at once converted into beautiful brunettes, much to the disgust of some of the blondes."

"The stay of these campers has developed the fact that cows have a great appetite for ladies' bustles, the bustle seeming to have a flavor very agreeable to the cow's taste.

"Sunday they had about 65 for dinner and about as many for supper.

"Last night they had a big time. The people being entertained by lady minstrels and music by the Spillville orchestra.

"The camp will not break up until some time next week."

Thus were the shadows of social and economic conditions cast, and one could predict that coming events would find Calmar growing into a modern town.

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CHAPTER VIII

“Sketches of Saints in Shadows”

Great men are always a product of one per cent inspiration and ninety nine per cent perspiration. In Calmar's history there are many such saints of independent industry whose saga has been lost forever. However, some histories are intact and they are presented to reveal the forces which molded them and the situations molded by them.

Observe, please, that their roots dug deeply into the 19th century and their branches gave shelter and shade to the first generation of the 20th century. Their lives are a testimony to the truth that the man of genious always works and endures five minutes longer than the ordinary man. Such is the difference between the hall of fame—or the hall of oblivion.

Consider now the following sketches of saints in the shadows of passing and coming events:

- One — “The Door and Window Man”
- Two — “The Streetlighter”
- Three — “The Young Old Man”
- Four — “The Wagon King”
- Five — “The Meat Man”

“The Door and Window Man” who still walks our streets is a friend of all, Carl Meyer, affectionately known as “Pop”. The best tribute paid to him (and his father, Jacob) was made by Dale Ahern, capable editor of the **Decorah Public Opinion**. This is Mr. Ahern's view in part—

“After rambling through a chill gray morning over icy pavement to Calmar, I found myself across the desk from one of Winneshiek county's foremost veterans of business, the kingpin in the Calmar Manufacturing plant, Carl Meyer.

At 69 Meyer is far from being the least active man in the plant. His quiet voice and gentle manner bely the dynamo of energy within his frame.

His climb from bookkeeper to owner of one of Winneshiek county's biggest enterprises will become one of the important and vitally interesting chapters in Winneshiek county history.

Like his father before him, he arose from humble beginnings.

Although he was born in Spillville, August 12, 1875, the story of Carl Meyer begins with a lonely ocean voyage.

It was at about the close of America's civil war. Jacob Meyer saw dawn breaking over the Alps of his native Switzerland. He walked briskly away from his home in Zurich.

In a secluded spot he met one who had waited for him and was destined to wait much longer. They were betrothed—Jacob and Bertha. He crushed her in his arms, letting his lips and eyes feast upon her compelling feminine charms while his heart leaped with things about to be born for him in a land far away.

Mingled Emotions.

Tears streamed down her cheeks, for Bertha was exceedingly sad and happy in the same instant. She, too, dreamed of tomorrow and the land beyond the blue horizon. But this was their farewell.

Jacob swung down the mountain trail.

'Oh, Jacob!' she cried after him. In Italy he would board a ship that would carry him thousands of miles away from her.

'I'll be back,' he shouted back to her, 'be back for you, dear!' His voice rose triumphantly above the din of the wind whistling through the caverns in the mountain.

Landing at New York, Jacob traveled by train cross-country to a little village buried in the heart of the great Middlewest. Friends awaited him there. Spillville—it held the promise of all great things to come for him and his Bertha.

At first he worked at anything he could find to do, hired out to farmers, clerked in stores, and finally settled temporarily into a clerking job in the J. J. Haug general merchandise store in Spillville.

A year or two after that Jacob and Haug's nephew, J. H. Hauge, bought the store in partnership.

Letters Across the Ocean.

Bertha and Jacob kept in touch with each other by letter, and from out of the shadow of his beloved Alpine home came many a fervent plea for Jacob to hasten homeward for her who waited through the years that seemed eternal. He was so busy getting a foothold in America, he scarcely realized how long he had been away—except when he sat down near the kerosene lamp on a quiet summer night to read one of his betrothed's letters.

One year during this interval, Jacob came to the conclusion he couldn't take time from his new business to return to Switzerland, so he wrote to Bertha asking her to meet him in New York. The message brought Bertha a keen disappointment, for she had hoped Jacob would marry her with traditional ceremony in the fatherland.

In New York the couple met without pomp but with great happiness and thanksgiving. After the simple marriage rites, they were feted at a wedding party in the home of a kindly Swiss family. Not long after Bertha was keeping house in Spillville.

In the late seventies the wheat failed throughout this area, and many farmers pulled stakes, took their families and meager belongings and sought new homes in Minnesota, South Dakota, and in other nearby states.

Jacob and Haug, his partner found their books full of accounts, a big stock on the shelves and nobody with money to buy their merchandise. The railroads at Calmar were creating considerable flurry, so Meyer and Haug decided to try their fortunes in the neighboring town.

There they bought a stock of general merchandise from an Anderson, who operated a store where Idor Bjonerud now runs a drygoods store. Meyer moved to Calmar, and Jacob ran the new store while Haug continued the Spillville business. Later they dissolved partnership, and Jacob took one A. Dostal as partner.

Start Elevator.

Sometime later they started operating an elevator—in the 80's—and began buying and selling livestock. At length Jacob and Dostal dissolved partnership, Dostal continuing with the store and Meyer with the elevator and livestock.

Carl Meyer received most of his education in the public school at Calmar in a little frame building later converted into several Calmar houses by Attorney J. B. Kaye, who is remembered as the author of 'Songs of Lake Geneva,' a collection of poems.

In the spring of 1893, C. W. Giesen, lumberman, J. B. Kaye, and Jacob Meyer with the support of 100 stockholders, launched the Calmar Manufacturing company—a sash-and-door factory, one of the very few in the state at that time.

Kaye acted as president, Jacob Meyer as secretary, and Giesen as treasurer. Carl took over many of his father's duties. Not one of the other men had qualifications as a book-keeper. In the fall of 1897 Carl married Emma Miller, daughter of Henry Miller, wagon factory owner.

That same fall Carl became manager of the company. Those were hard years, the veteran factory operator recalls. 'The depression of 1932 was a baby beside that!'

Rode Bike.

'I was getting \$45 a month, and we saved money out of that. We lived in a house with no modern improvements for



An early shot of the Calmar Manufacturing Company — can you guess them?

which we paid \$8 a month rent. I rode a bike back and forth between home and the office.

I've spent more on a family car per month in later years than my total salary was in those days.'

The plant didn't start making money until 1898, one year after Carl became manager. Expert workman out of work because of the panic, drifted into Calmar and became the first crew to operate the plant.

Calmar Crew.

As times became more prosperous, these outsiders returned to their home communities, and Calmar boys who had been hired as apprentices took over.

One of Carl Meyer's keenest satisfactions came out of his realization that the plant has a good employee record. Among men still working there after nearly 40 years is James Krall, who started September 9, 1907; Sidney Twedt, began September 23, 1913; Charlie Uher, started June 12, 1905; Frank Uher, started May 9, 1910; and Adolph Uher, who began April 13, 1914.

In a little notebook with the names arranged alphabetically—a book started by Gus Anderson when he worked at the plant—are lists of all workers ever employed at the plant.

Sons Partners

Both sons, Don and Kenneth, were taken into the company by Carl Meyer as partners. After operating 40 years as a corporation, the business was entirely in Meyer hands. He had bought all the stock.

Then as the snow swirls like wind-driven rain in slanting streaks across the window pane in one corner of the little office and the wind whistles a bit forlornly under the sills, Carl Meyer straightens in his chair, looks up from the little record book and observes, 'I guess every boy that ever grew up here worked at one time or another in the plant.'"

"THE STREET LIGHTER"

Another outstanding Calmar citizen is Frank Pletka who in fifty years as town marshal never had a gun fight. His story is ably told in part by John Reynolds in **The Cedar Rapids Gazette**.

"By rights they should call Frank Pletka 'Mr. Calmar.' For the last 50 years he's been quite a man about town here.

Eighty years old on July 3, 1948, Pletka came to Calmar about 50 years ago and for the last half-century he has worked for the city of Calmar as a public employee.

When the town fathers hired Frank, they did so because they needed a fellow to take care of several little jobs:

- (1) Be the town marshal.
- (2) Light the street lights.
- (3) Take care of the street improvements.
- (4) Take care of the water system.

All of the 'little jobs' have grown to be big ones. And Frank Pletka is still on the job, or rather the jobs. Now he's the boss, of course, and he has help. He's tried to resign and they've promised to get him a successor—but the relief hasn't come as yet and Pletka is still on fulltime duty.

During his 50-year career as 'Mr. Calmar,' Frank Pletka not only has seen the streets improved—he directed their building.

He had charge of the water system since it was first a pump out at the sash-and-door factory and he directed the drilling of the first and then the second of the town's deep wells and the erection of two pump houses. First there was a frame building which sheltered the pump over the first well and provided a little other space. Then came the modern waterworks building which is Calmar's today.

Extension of the waterworks system, which today is Frank Pletka's pride and joy, came indirectly because of the Milwaukee railroad. The road, which was and still is a big

operator into and out of Calmar in four directions, needed more water. The road appealed to the town fathers and the water system expansion followed—under Pletka's direction. Today Calmar has a 350-foot well and a 50-foot well, situated a short distance apart and with their pump houses in the waterworks building.

The up-to-date pumping and purification system today delivers 150 gallons of water a minute, stores great quantities in the town's standpipe.

Pletka has been complimented many times by state health authorities for the cleanliness of both the water in the Calmar system and the neatness and efficiency of the plant itself.

Words of praise have rung more than once in Pletka's ears and they have been small, but appreciated thanks for his years of service.

"How about the street system, Frank?" you ask the aged commissioner.

"Ha! There wasn't any street system to speak of in Calmar when I came here," he replies. "There were just some roads—and pretty bad ones at that." Calmar today boasts more than its share of paved thoroughfares and a lot of streets which are otherwise all-weather surfaced.

Then you ask Frank about the light system Calmar has had. First, he remembers, there were the old oil lamps and then lamps which were fed by gas which was manufactured right in Calmar. And then came the electricity.

Until the day of electricity, Calmar's street lights were ignited each evening by Commissioner-Marshall-Lamplighter Pletka.

"There were as many as 45 street lights at one time," Pletka says. He can't remember how long it took him to light them.

That's a reflection on the way Frank has served his town—and served it well. He didn't count the hours, or the minutes. He worked until the day's work was done and then came back at night, whenever it was necessary and he was called out for some emergency."

THE YOUNG OLD MAN

"The Young Old Man" of Calmar, who is very much alive, is Joseph Koch. "Joe" can be found in the offices of his friends, Judge Goheen and Attorney Neuzil. All three have keen minds.

Today at 84 Joe takes a back seat for none. He discusses intelligently the problems of modern polities, but beware if you are a Republican. Joe thinks if you are a "common man" and vote the Republican ticket you are spitting in your own face. Now read his story as it appeared in the Decorah Public Opinion.

"Joseph Koch was only 13 years old, but he could work like a grown man. People observed that he seemed unusually old for his age.

Still, he felt an unpleasant tugging at his heart when in 1860 the hard lot of his parents forced him to leave their home in Eppe, Germany, and go to work as a tinner's apprentice in Upper Westphalia.

Young Joseph's mother tearfully packed her son's clothes together, gave him a chunk of bologna, and bade him goodbye. As he rode away in a buggy with a friend, Joe looked back sadly at his father's little farm. He knew he would often long for his people and the little place at Eppe, 70 miles west of the Rhine, in the days to come.

But Joe was only one of a family of six children, and people in Germany were not exactly prosperous in those days. Everybody's existence was cramped by the 'mailed fist' of the Kaiser.

Learning His Trade.

In Upper Westphalia Joe worked three years, learning the tinner's trade. He received not a penny's wages—only room and board. At the end of those three years, Kiesler, his boss, offered him one mark (about 25c) a week to continue.

One Sunday morning early in March, 1885, as Joe made the usual six-mile hike to the little farm at Eppe, he dreamed of his brother, Anton, now beginning his second year in America. Anton's occasional letters indicated he was making good in Milwaukee where he was running a rooming house. Joe was 19 now—just old enough for service in the Kaiser's army. He hated that.

As Joe loitered that morning at his mother's breakfast table, he saw the kindly woman move toward him mysteriously, holding a letter in one hand while she rubbed an apron corner into her eyes with the other. 'Why this sudden sadness?' Joe wondered.

The young man's heart pounded as he took the letter his mother had opened. It was from Anton, from Milwaukee.

And there was a ticket in it, a ticket for passage to America. The ticket called for transportation from Rotterdam to Milwaukee. Anton had paid \$13.50 for it! 'And it's for me!' Joe exclaimed.

It bothered him, though, to look up from the letter and ticket and find his mother weeping. 'Oh, Joe,' his mother cried, 'what are you going to do?'

Opportunity.

Joe studied the letter again. He could hardly believe it. Passage to America. His chance to escape military service

in the Kaiser's army. And an opportunity, perhaps, to make a real place for himself as a tinner.

'If you want to use the ticket,' Anton's letter explained, 'all right. If not, send it back so I can get my money back.'

'What are you going to do, my son?' Joe heard his mother's voice faintly, as if it came from far out over the German countryside. Suddenly he awoke from his stupor.

'Yes,' he said abruptly, 'I'm going. I'm going to leave.'

By this time Joe, who had been mature at 13, was old at 19. 'You're an old man young,' his mother said as if she were talking to herself, just thinking aloud. 'An old man young.'

Little Choice.

Joe's mother brought out the little money bag when Joe was ready to leave Eppe. She had saved 200 marks for him. She hung the bag around his neck and had him conceal it under his clothes.

Trip to Ruhr.

A cousin took Joe in a buggy to Muhleim on the Ruhr. There he met a traveling salesman, who had permission to travel in Holland. You had to have permission from the mayor of your town to move from one place to another. Joe had to be careful to avoid disclosing the purpose of his plan.

Had officials learned he was going to America, now that he was of military age, they would have refused to honor his identification book. The traveling man helped Joe into Holland. At Emmerich two policemen ordered Joe out to the platform for a routine examination. He left his little traveling bag with the salesman.

'Will you have a beer?' Joe asked, whereupon both policemen became friendly enough and accompanied the young German into a saloon. After treating the policemen, Joe asked them when a train would be coming back from Rotterdam.

'In two days,' he was told.

'Well, perhaps, I'll see you then,' he replied, and the policemen permitted him to go without further investigation.

In Rotterdam Joe learned that the Leerdam, ship on which he was scheduled to sail, was badly damaged by icebergs. Travelers had a choice of waiting two weeks at Rotterdam or of going to Amsterdam and taking the Zandam. Joe went to Amsterdam.

About half an hour after the ship pulled out, Joe was delighted to see the white cliffs of Dover come into view. 'It's a funny feeling,' he said to a fellow passenger, a London

tinner who likewise was going to America to seek his fortune, 'to know you're leaving the old world behind, probably never again to see any of the old familiar faces or places.'

New Courage.

Although the ship was moving west, it seemed to Joseph Koch, as he stood on deck viewing the white Dover cliffs, as if the vessel were lying still and the land moving east.

Suddenly Joe felt a new courage, a kind of awakening of new powers within him. He thought of what his mother had said when she realized her boy was growing away from her: 'You're an old man young, Joe.' Yes, now that he had only the ocean under him, everything he had known—home, friends, life in Germany—all behind, and only unpredictable adventure ahead, he did feel old.

After reaching open sea rough weather settled upon the face of the deep. Portholes of the ship had to be kept closed three days. Once Joe persuaded a ship's engineer to let him venture out upon the deck to see what effect the storm was having.

Saltwater Episode.

Joe saw the ship diving into abysmal troughs among gigantic waves. The entire ship was engulfed momentarily. Joe was soaked to the skin by saltwater.

After 15 days of sailing, Joe was glad to see the city of New York sprouting slowly above the skyline. 'It'll bring big things for us,' the Londoner said. 'Lots of jobs. Big money.'

Joe felt growing uncertainty. 'I'm afraid we may be disappointed,' he told his companion. 'The old country ways are not likely to be the same as the new country ways.'

After lying over in New York a day and a night, Joe met the Londoner, the next morning. He was pessimistic, hadn't found a job yet. 'If I don't get work within an hour,' he grumbled, 'I'm going back to London.'

At last Joe was on a train headed for Milwaukee. He nibbled at a piece of bologna his mother had put in his pack. A newsboy came selling fruits and candies to the people on the train. He was selling long, slender, yellow fruits, the like of which Joe had never seen. He imagined he could catch a faint tantalizing smell as the newsboy flaunted two or three of the strange fruits over his head.

'Bananas!' the newsboy shouted. 'Better buy one!' he urged Joe. 'They're delicious!' Joe couldn't understand what the fellow was saying, but he concluded he was supposed to buy one. After he did it, he scarcely knew what to do with it. He stuck one end of it into his mouth and started to bite down on it when the newsboy ran to his rescue.

'No! No! Like this,' the newsboy explained, turning the peel down about half way off the fruit. But when Joe started to eat the banana, he realized a keen disappointment. He didn't relish the strange new flavor. When the newsboy wasn't looking he tossed the fruit out the window.

Met Cousin.

In Milwaukee Joe was met by a cousin, Gustav Figge, who took the new arrival to the rooming house run by Anton Koch. It was a joyous reunion that followed.

That evening as Joe sat uncomfortably in his travel-grimed clothing, now stiff as boards from the saltwater salt with which they were caked, Anton asked, 'Have you any money?'

'A hundred marks,' Joe replied.

'Get it out,' Anton commanded. 'Our cousin is going to the old country in a day or two. He'll give you par value in American money for the marks and take them back with him to Germany.'

With the \$24.75 Joe got in American money in exchange for his marks, he bought new clothes from head to foot. With his brother's supervision, he went into a Milwaukee store with his \$24.75 and a little later came out with new underwear, socks, shirt, shoes, hat, a fine suit, and enough money left for beer.

He and his brother and cousin had the beer, and then Joe had not a cent to his name. In fact he still owed Anton \$13.50 for the ticket to America.

It was not long until Joe started to work on his first job as a tinner at \$5.50 a week. He was paying his brother \$3.50 a week for board and room and still had more money left than he would make in a month in Germany.

Invitation.

One day William Becker of Ft. Atkinson, Ia., came to Anton's house to stay. He had brought a carload of cattle to Milwaukee to sell at the stockyards there. He became interested in Joe and talked with him about Joe's numerous relatives in Winneshiek County, the Beckers, Meyers, and Figges.

Joe made the trip. But he stopped at Ossian, for it was there most of his 'new world' relatives lived. 'That my trunk?' he kept exclaiming to the conductor as the train neared Ossian. It was the best English he could command, and he was afraid the conductor would not understand.

The first person he met in Ossian was Theodore Fleisher. Seeing what a greenhorn Joe was, Fleisher talked German to him, then directed him to the homes of Joe Becker, Frank Dessel, Charlie Meyer, and Frank Figge.

Joe started to work at once for Joe Becker at \$225.00 a year in addition to board and room! Now, the young German felt as if he would really get ahead. He saved his money scrupulously and spent all his spare time studying English.

Joe's first three customers in Becker's store talked English, and he felt so squelched after the harrowing experience of trying to serve them without being able to converse with them that he began to regret his decision to come to Ossian.

'Still,' he thought, 'I can't break my contract.' All he had was a verbal understanding with Becker, but he respected a contract of any kind. Otherwise he would have returned to Milwaukee with little ado.

In six months nobody could get the better of him! He talked English more than German. He felt new strength, like the courage and power that swelled within him as he saw Europe fading into the distance and realized that he was striking out entirely on his own into a strange world.

Joseph Koch moved to Calmar in 1891 and entered the general merchandise business with C. W. Giesen. On October 23, 1894, he was married to Anna Sobolik. In 1898 he and Giesen dissolved partnership, and Joe formed a new partnership with his brother-in-law, Wenzel Sobolik. They bought out Paul Meister and operated a store where the bank building is now.

Back to Calmar.

Joe was in that business two years. About that time his uncle, Frank Figge, built a big store building in Ossian and Joe went into partnership with his uncle. About six months later he was back in Calmar, running a general merchandise store, built by Wenzel Sobolik, where the French Furniture Store is now.

In 1937 Joe's wife died, and in 1941 Joe retired. Today he is a young old man. Life has reversed the tables for Joe. People who know him marvel at his strength, at the brilliance of his mind."

THE WAGON KING

The Fourth in this series is "The Wagon King". The history is aptly told by Mrs. Frank Uher, well known newspaper correspondent.

"In the year 1865, shortly after the close of the Civil War, a young blacksmith named Henry Miller, traveling westward from New York state in search of a place to locate and ply his trade arrived in the village of Calmar. He rented an old building which stood on the site of the present wagon company shop and engaged in the business of blacksmithing, horse-shoeing and general repair work.

Business became brisk and shortly afterward a brother, John Miller, a wagon maker by trade, joined him as a partner.

It was in this little shop that this business foundation for the success was laid and it soon became known in northeast Iowa.

Two years later John Miller died and his place was taken by J. A. Giesing, an experienced blacksmith, machinist, and all-around mechanic. The firm name was now known as Miller & Giesing and company. It never became quite clear as to whom the term 'company' referred to. However, there is a saying that there was a big burly Irishman, A. E. Manchester by name, who did seem to have some connection with the shop, although he never worked there as he was a machinist in the Milwaukee Round House. It is said that it was he who invented the three-horse evener which became very popular and which was manufactured by the firm at a fine profit.

Expansion.

As business increased another wagon maker by the name of Hurlbut was hired by the firm who served as a foreman until 1880. When he resigned he was replaced by Theodore Lutz, who held that position until 1917 when he resigned and moved to New York state. When Hurlbut took over, new machinery was installed and more man power added. A giant lathe was also installed for turning steel shaftings to take care of the ever-increasing business.

This became the red letter period for this company and more man and mechanical power was added again so as to launch what later became a major enterprise, the manufacture of wagons and bob sleighs. A monster grindstone mounted in the street beside the shop on which the plows were ground and polished remained in its place for many years as a monument to the departed venture of manufacturing plows.

Another point of interest was that for years the plant's steam boilers were located outside the shops.

An Innovation.

The manufacture of a complete wagon was an innovation in the Calmar community and this brightly painted vehicle with the lettering 'M-i-l-l-e-r' grew to be known not only throughout Iowa, but Wisconsin, Minnesota, North and South Dakota and Nebraska. The annual output was over 1000 wagons and sleighs. The company's largest order was for wagons for the U. S. army.

Blacksmithing and repair work, its main business at first, now became a side line. It was necessary to add a salesman. C. H. Schultz was the first salesman. Later he was succeeded by W. V. Yager who also remained with the firm until 1917.

After a partnership of 21 years J. A. Giesing withdrew from the firm in 1882 and established a hardware business which is still conducted by his sons under the name of Giesing Bros. After his withdrawal from the firm the business carried on under the name of Henry Miller, Jr., until 1917 when Mr. Miller withdrew from complete ownership and management of the company. At this time the business was incorporated as the Miller Wagon Co., with a number of stockholders from Calmar and Winneshiek county.

However, Mr. Miller served as president of the company until his death in 1920.

He was born in Suchenheim, Germany, March 2, 1839, and came to America with his parents in 1842, settling in New York state and from there came to Calmar.

The business flourished for a number of years after his death and suddenly went into a decline and in July, 1937, was offered for sale by the stockholders.

A business that was valued at approximately \$50,000 was sold in 1937 to Anton Chvatal and John Havel for \$3,000, and they are successfully operating this factory, still making wagons and sleighs in connection with truck cabs.

Today the wagon company is owned and operated by the Berg Brothers. They have put new life into the industry and the wagon boxes roll merrily along."

"THE MEAT MAN"

Finally we must discuss a man whose passing away in May 1944 brought much sorrow to the community. Henry Weselmann for more than fifty years had been a prominent Calmar business man.

Born in Hamburg, Germany, on December 15, 1868 and coming to the states at the age of seventeen, he located at Elkader, Iowa, but moved from there to Calmar in 1891. At first he entered the meat market and stock buying business with G. A. Meyer. By 1896 the partnership was dissolved and Ernest Hess from Germany became his partner. In 1907 they erected the modern meat market which today is so well managed by his two sons, Ralph and Alvin.

Previous to building the market and during the market's early growth, Mr. Weselmann worked prodigiously in selling meat via the cart. He drove his little cart over all roads, through all types of weather expanding his trade. Always tucked away was a little bologna or delicacy that he gave away freely. His routes were long and hard. People not only expected him, but waited to share their problems and dreams with him.

The new meat market was the largest of its type in northeast Iowa and prospered quickly. It now holds a unique

place because the meat market of its type and calibre has given way to a vending process with meats killed miles away. The softness of sawdust underfoot and the smell of fresh meats and smoked sausages nostalgically reminds the author of the days when as a little boy he tramped barefooted into a little old fashioned meat market to get some liver to go fishing. As much liver as you wanted was free.

Mr. Weselmann, quiet but friendly, was active in civic events and served as mayor in 1926 and 1927. He was united in marriage with Zetta Robbins in 1898, and they were the parents of six children: Ralph, Doris, Irving, Miltin, Ina (Mrs. J. C. Iverson) and Alvin. A tragedy struck the family on May 30, 1911 when Doris and Irving were killed by a south bound train at Ft. Atkinson. The train smashed their wagon and team. The Weselmann's were left with a traumatic heartache. Yet, Mr. Weselmann carried on and to this day many speak of him with warmth and affection.

"Want to see Henry Weselmann? Well look at Ralph. He's just like him."



Calmar Wagon Company (formerly Millers)

CHAPTER IX

The Coming of an Irishman

Not every community can boast of an M.D. of the prominence and permanence of the Calmar physician, Felix A. Hennessy. A graduate of the University of Iowa at the age of 24 in 1907, he deliberately sought a small town practice. To get through college the young doctor taught school, slung hash, and planted corn. Completely "sapped out", he desired something easy for a while so he could get back on his feet physically; so he came to Calmar for a year or two and is still going strong after forty-three years of continuous service. He has yet to get the "rest" he was seeking.

A PARADOXICAL LIFE

Written in a restrained manner, the facts still make this man appeared as a giant; yet he has bee, and is, an humble servant of the people. His brain is one of the keenest, and often he has divined the secrets of other minds. Yet he has among his friends many of the unlearned. His work on the state and national committees of medical welfare brings him into contact with the world's great. Yet he walks our streets as any ordinary citizen.

His is a paradoxical life. Given often to moods, he is most stable for good. A strong family man, he lives alone with the memory of his beloved wife and looks forward to the visits of his daughter. An ardent Catholic, liberal and generous in his humanitarian approach, he is a Republican by choice and work.

One of his patients, who recalls meeting the doctor during his first year in town and who has had him all these years as a family physician, said to the author, "Dr. Hennessy is a perfect gentleman. Always a sense of humor, and even if you got something wrong with you, Doc can find a joke. He's as good as they come."

Dr. Hennessy has enough human interest stories at his disposal to fill several books. Many of them deal not only with his patients, but with the town he has served so long and so well. He recalls, on first coming to Calmar, taking long walks through the cemeteries; and he meditates in his very, very soft voice, "I was amazed and surprised at the number of mothers who had died in their late teens or early twenties. 'Childbirth fever' claimed most of them! Today we know how to handle it."

Another narrative, not too well known, concerns Carl Emil Seashore, Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Iowa. Dr. Seashore was a famous psychologist and an outstanding scientist. One day Dr. Hennessy was a little surprised to find the good doctor in the old Calmar depot in a mild state of confusion. The psychologist had missed the train to Fayette where he was scheduled to give the commencement address. Dr. Hennessy took charge of the situation and made provisions for getting him to Fayette.

Seashore said to Hennessy, "Nice of you, Doctor. Pray tell me what is the name of this town?"

"Calmar," proudly came the reply.

"Calmar, how do you spell it?"

"C-A-L-M-A-R"

"Now isn't that coincidental? Same name as my birth place in Sweden, only we spelled it K-A-L-M-A-R. Funny I never heard of Calmar before."

Through the years Dr. Hennessy has rubbed elbows with all types of humanity. He has always maintained an interest in the unusual. See him as he crosses the railroad tracks enroute to his office. "Old George" Wunfutter, known to every "kid", is on duty faithfully tending to his flag crossing. Greetings are warmly exchanged, and "Doc" proceeds to his office.

DOC KNOWS ALL THE PEOPLE

Sitting in the early morning sun is Hans Frieze with his smelly pipe hanging lazily out of the corner of his mouth. Hans will be sitting on the steps of Doc's office most of the day, except for the few hours when the streets need a man or a grave needs digging. Hans has that happy faculty of existing without working or caring if his old shack should tumble down.

Doc Hennessy speaks, "Well, Hans, how long have you had those overalls on?"

Hans looks at the torn jacket and begrimed jeans, "'Tain't too long yet; they haven't fallen off. Ought to be good for all winter." True to form, Hans won't change until his clothes fall off.

Coffee time arrives, and Doc slips across the street to a little cafe run by Mary Shema. Well-liked and well-known, Mary's place is a favorite of many. (Mary's cafe was located where the Friendly Tavern is now.) She was in the cafe business for nearly 60 years.

After many country calls, Doc stops at the old Variety Store, a favorite hang out for the Calmar kids for years, to

pick out some sweets. It is run by Mary Lundgren in the building which later would house Herman Rosendahl's Barber Shop. Mary had previously taught school; and after a brief but witty conversation, Doc departs to make a call at the hotel.

PIERCE — CALMAR LEGEND

In the Calmar House Tom Pierce holds forth. He built part of it and operated it for years. Doc is brought up to date on the latest railroad news. He is about to go home, when the diligent phone operator, (always pretty sure of Doe's whereabouts), notifies him that Diana Tenold needs him.

Diana, a former school teacher, keeps house for her brother, Ole. She greets him with a loud, friendly laugh. Hard of hearing, she, nevertheless, holds her own in joking with Doc.

Now home to eat and rest, only more country calls pour in; and Doc never questions their need. Such is his life for many days.

Soon, however, the state and nation recognized his ability and required his services on an increasing scale. Doe would sit and ponder. How could he carry on for Calmar and do all the other work, too? But carry on, he did. The patients' unpaid bills piled up. "Surely they will pay when able." Scenes of would-be suicides, cancer patients, and little Jimmy's fevered body filled his mind. To all he was a "father confessor", knowing more secrets than any man, and keeping those secrets as a faithful trust.

A FRIEND OF THE PROFESSIONS

Doctor Hennessy has carried many burdens, but always he has been a staunch friend of three professions, the clergy, teachers, and medical men.

Very sympathetic to the "men of the cloth", he served all religious men. One who knows him well said, "Dr. Hennessy is a Christian. If all physicians were like him, there would be little need for us fellows." Many priests and ministers have found solace in Doe's sage samplings of salvation.

To the teachers he has been their best friend. Ever progressive, he keeps abreast of modern education. Disappointed in the recent defeat of a new gym, Doe took heart, "Maybe it's for the best. Perhaps someday we will have a real field house, separate from the present building; and today's gym will be made into class rooms. I'm not discouraged."

During the war Dr. Hennessy served on many committees. He kept his brethren in chuckles by saying, "I have to buy these bonds and keep Chet Peek and Phil Giesen bonded just so the navy and army will have enough to feed them."

DOC'S COLLEAGUES

Dr. Hennessy recalls clearly every doctor who has practiced here and most of those in the state. Some doctors, completely unknown to them, have been admitted into medical societies because of Doc's ability to pull strings, tactfully force issues, and satisfactorily arbitrate the most difficult of the individualistic followers of Hippocrates.

In thinking back over his near half century of practice, Dr. Hennessy recalls Calmar's first physician, Dr. J. S. Roome. Originally from London, Ontario, Dr. Roome graduated from the University of Michigan. He arrived by railroad in 1866. His practice extended well into the turn of the century, and his name was prominently associated with Calmar events.

Roome welcomed Hennessy, and both worked in a friendly spirit. At the time Hennessy arrived, there were other doctors; but they did not stay long. They were, namely: Dr. Grist and two brothers, Philip and Alphonse Mae Laughlin.

Later Dr. Fred Amkrum came, but he stayed only a year. Dr. E. M. Heflin also stayed a short time.

Dr. C. D. Horton, uncle of V. J. Horton, who practiced in Fort Atkinson, moved here and was well received.

Dr. E. A. Ellingson, an eclectic physician, was a Calmar servant for more than forty years. He was well known and well liked in the community and served it faithfully. Mrs. Ellingson, energetic and likeable, helped put her husband through medical school. Also, she assisted several other doctors. She is a real credit to all.

DR. V. J. HORTON, MOURNED

Dr. V. J. Horton, who had practiced at Preston, Minnesota, moved here. He literally worked himself to death, giving so freely and unselfishly of his time and talent. After his untimely death, the community realized the stature of this splendid personality. His family still reside here. Who can explain life's great mystery? A good man like Dr. Horton goes so soon, while ne'er do wells can live on and on.

Dr. Galen Boller had a large practice here for four years before going to California for research work. He is well remembered.

Following Dr. Boller, Dr. Paul Neagle arrived on the scene. Capable and an indefatigable worker, he is earning an enviable reputation as a "patient's doctor". Calmar heartily welcomes him.

In the field of dentistry, Dr. J. C. Conover looms large. He and Dr. Hennessy converted the stage of the old opera house into the present offices. Dr. Conover was one of the most outstanding civic minded men ever to live in Calmar.

He still carries on in a retired capacity. The influence of this man for good will never be forgotten.

Other dentists serving were Dr. Kuhn, Dr. George Belding, (uncle of Dr. Belding in Waucoma), Dr. R. R. Page who bought out Dr. Belding, also Dr. C. F. Sobolik practiced for many years. It is possible there was another dentist and also probable that old man "Doc" Walter of McGregor, coronet playing dentist, rode a circuit through this area.

Today Dr. C. K. Peck is a blessing to the hundreds in Calmar. "Chet" is a well rounded, well read gentleman, who knows his business and is ever concerned for his patients. His stock of historical lore is unlimited and his story-telling imitable. Once "Chet" starts on his navy experiences or Calmar legend yours will be a pleasant sitting.

All these Dr. Hennessy has seen in his years of devotion. In the interim, he has made time to carry on a long list of local, state, and national work. Locally, Dr. Hennessy has been a member of the Winneshiek County Medical Society for forty years and has held every office. It is interesting to note that the now defunct Northeast Iowa Medical Society which dated back to 1859 and lists Dr. F. Andros as the first medical doctor in Iowa, was guided by Dr. Hennessy. He served as its secretary. In Calmar he has been president of the Board of Education. Also, he has served for years on the County Board of Education.

A NATIONAL FIGURE

State and national groups have benefited by his leadership. As a member of the State Medical Society and a member of the Council he has handled many ethical problems. He served as president during 1939-40. Also, he has been a member of the following committees: Speakers Bureau, Library and Public Relations.

Further, he has been president of the T. B. Society which now includes the Iowa Heart Association. Various societies list him as a member such as Phi Rho Sigma, Alpha Omega Alpha National Honor Society, and the American Association of General Practitioners. He also helped to organize Blue Shield in the state.

As a glimpse into the spiritual recess of his mind here is part of a reprint from **The Journal of the Iowa State Medical Society**. The speech is entitled "A Profession or a Trade?" by the President-Elect. It is as follows:

"Organized medicine is not a trade union. Physicians are not selling commodities in competition with other merchants. They are not merchants of health, selling cures or formulae, or medicines, or instruments. Physicians are professional men giving service for which they may or may not be paid, and

they must expect to give in regardless of fee. They are privileged servants of the sick, and being obligated by an oath, should carry themselves on higher planes than those who buy and sell for profit.

However, the finest ideals will not propagate themselves. In organized medicine we have the happy combination of ideals plus organization. Individuals may worthily desire to serve and build, to imbibe deeply of idealism, tolerance and understanding, but alone they fail to impress the general idea of indifference, selfishness, hate and bigotry. With an organization of men similarly imbued with and fortified by an exuberance of ideals, mutual helpfulness and a spiritual association which marshals for him an army of knowledge, experience, facts, and literature, and binds all together in a perfect union, the individual becomes an integral part of a great altruistic force for human good. We are a great body with uniform allegiances and of recognized importance in the councils of the nation. We may be proud of the past, but we grow with the years. We think of the fine and commanding achievements of a glorious past, but we consecrate ourselves to a bigger future of helpful service to humanity.

Thus did great men cast their shadows on the gateway to little Switzerland.



TOPUS — Small on People's Health
John



Great storm of 1906 left the bay at
water marks of 100 feet.



The Roundhouse after the great storm in 1918



The Calmar Hotel

PART FOUR

1918 to the Atomic Age with a backward and forward look



The Gods Say--
"It is Darkest
Before the Sunrise"



Chapters

X THE GOLDEN ERA

XI CALMAR AT THE CROSSROADS

XII THE MEN OF GOODWILL



W. and the "Tobacco" in the World



China Tobacco



China Tobacco men — the day after



Chinese Cotton — the Chinese
Government



The Chinese Cotton

CONCLUDING CONVERSATION AT MID-NIGHT

When a problem preys on the mind, a person is apt to do almost anything, logical or illogical, to get it settled. Spirits conversing on top of a water tank, ghosts of Calmar pioneers that I had never seen and who disappeared if I made a sound! Gremlins, elves, goblins, banshees, imps, devils, fairies, spirits, ghosts, what have you,—going swimming!

So I climbed the silvered rungs again to have it out with them! I heard voices as I neared the top. I hurried to confront them; only they were waiting for me. Sure, I was scared. These ethereal ectoplastic outlines; moving effortlessly with ease.

The taller one, who was Skotland, spoke, "See, where you fellows are getting wise—Going to celebrate my coming to Calmar."

I squeaked a, "Yes, sir."

Skotland, "Good idea. Calmar people need to be brought closer together in a spirit of love and comradeship. 'Hate never pays.'"

Landin, the short fat one, boomed, "That's for sure."

Clark, angular and lanky, like a sheet waving in a wind, "You moderns have some fine plans, lots of wonderful things to enjoy. Put hard work into it, you'll succeed."

Landin, "You bet!"

Skotland, "Hard work and inspiration make genius. Add faith in God and man, and Calmar will have a golden century. Your wonderful atomic age will bring Heaven or Hell to Calmar, depending on how much faith and good work you have."

Clark, "Speaking of atoms, we have a nuclear planning session to attend. See you later; always remember that since matter can be neither created nor destroyed, the spiritual stuff of the pioneer will never leave Calmar."

Epilogue

I saw two interesting characters today. The first chap was an engineer from Des Moines. He specializes in standpipe construction. I told him hastily of my strange adventures. How could ghosts swim? He patted me lightly on the shoulder and said, "Technically speaking, Doc, whenever the water pressure drops a few pounds, the air bubbles through the water. Those were your swimming ghosts." He passed on with a grin.

Suddenly another hand grabbed my shoulder, "You're as pale as a ghost. Why don't you take a fishing trip; and here, try these pills. They will settle your nerves." Dr. Neagle is a swell fellow. Golly, I feel good—no ghosts, and the drinking water is pure!

CHAPTER X

The Golden Era, 1918-1950

In retrospect many people felt that the "golden era" of Calmar started around the first World War; and except for depressions, economic repercussion, and wars has continued to the present! Whatever is the correct label for the period, one fact remains in the final analysis, progress has been made. This chapter will outline it.

At the close of the first war the toboggan slide in the north end of town, which had given many kids and grown-ups delightful thrills, passed from the scene. Also gone from the public mind was Edison's proposed "super highway" to run from Chicago to the Twin Cities, possibly through Calmar. The super highway, designed for bicycles only, would have cost one million dollars; and a toll charge of ten cents would have been made for each wheel. The horseless carriage, by then firmly established, abolished the scheme.

THE GREAT STORM

People still talked about the "great storm" of May 7, 1918. They had never seen anything like it, and no wonder; for the wind took the top off the old watertank and set it on the roof of the Weselmann's house. Window after window was shattered; clothing was blown off people's backs and clothes-lines into fields; dust sifted into every nook and cranny of the houses; and one house collapsed on several people, killing them instantly. The old roundhouse was also a casualty.

Memories of the first war were real and profound. The American Legion performed an act of lasting value when they marked the graves of all the veterans of various wars. Bronze markers were installed. Edward Luzum kindly and graciously worked hard to get a list of the veterans of the Civil and Spanish American Wars. Our apologies to the families and friends of any not mentioned. The Civil War soldiers were: John W. Tower; T. W. Hazelton; George H. Pennington; J. Winn; Simeon Potter, Pvt. Co. K, 32 Regmt. Co. D, 16 Regmt., Wis. Vol. Inf.; John Peterson, 13th Iowa Regmt. Co. G; Charles Sydow, Co. D, 27 Iowa Inf.; Wenzel Frana; and John Miller.

The Spanish American War veterans were: John J. Hove, Pvt. 49 Iowa Inf.; Ole Evenson; and John Daly.

The American Legion Auxiliary was organized in 1921 with nineteen members. The first officers were as follows:

Mrs. John Dyrland, President; Mrs. S. Yager, Vice President; and Mrs. Frank Marron, Secretary-Treasurer. The Auxiliary has performed many valuable services, and today the membership is eighty-nine.

THE AMERICAN LEGION

Predating the Auxiliary by two years, the American Legion was born. Its history is well told by the present Commander, Francis G. Meyer, who has built the post into its largest membership in history. Here is his account.

"The John Halverson Jr. Post 266, Calmar, Iowa, of the American Legion was organized on November 11, 1919. This meeting we held in the Noeckel's Hall. The following officers were elected: Frank Marron, Commander; Andrew Halverson, Vice-commander; H. D. Yager, Adjutant; Otto Rassauzen, Finance Officer; Walter Yager, Chaplain; and Lawrence Djunesrud, Post Historian; Executive committee: A. N. Huber, Walter Hoffbauer, Victor Becker, Gerhard Borlaug, and George Hacins.

"Immediately after this first meeting all former servicemen were given a banquet by the citizens of Calmar in appreciation of their service to their country.

NAMING OF THE POST

"The Post was named for John Halverson Jr., the first Calmar boy to lose his life in World War I. The other heroes who gave their all in this conflict were Walter Dyrland, William Twedt, George Steuseth, and Fred Rosnbaum.

"After VE and VJ days, when most of the boys had returned from World War II, the Calmar Community Club sponsored a fish fry as a Homecoming Welcome. It was at this time the Post changed its name to Halverson-Giesen Post. Carl Giesen was the first local boy to lose his life in World War II. The five other heroes who lost their lives in this conflict were: Leo Brom, Walter Brom, Harold Frieske, Elmer Bulgren, and Cyril Schmeberger, Festina. (Festina veterans are members of the Halverson-Giesen Post.)

"The Charter membership of the Post totaled thirty-six. There were variations up and down from this figure. At times it was low, but there was always enough spark and determination to drive forward. The influx of veterans of World War II was welcomed by their comrades in arms of the first war, who had done much to make the road easier for the returning veterans of the second war. This added membership more than doubled the strength of the Halverson-Giesen Post, so that in this year of Calmar's Centennial and the thirty-first year of the Legion in Calmar, the membership stands at

an all time high of eighty-five members, a tribute to the efforts of all the members, which space prohibits listing, who gave unstintingly of time and effort through the years.

THE HOUSING PROBLEMS

"The housing is another story of ups and downs. The first regular meeting was held in G. A. Meyer's office; and a few meetings were held in the Town Hall, because no rooms were available, and there was also a lack of funds. The first official Legion rooms were in the Weselmann building above the Meat Market. Later the Post moved to the basement of the Hotel. In 1931, a Legion Cabin was built in Fort Atkinson adjacent to the City Park. The quarters were used very little during the last few years the Post had them. They then leased the Frana Hall (Noeckels) and disposed of the Cabin at Fort Atkinson; this was in 1946. In 1947 the Legion again found themselves occupying the same quarters in the Hotel they had occupied more than 20 years before. This year, 1950, Calmar's Centennial, the Legion has just moved back into the Frana Hall after doing a remodeling job. They now have the most spacious, comfortable, and complete quarters they have ever occupied, combining a large auditorium that can be used for public gatherings or dances with beautiful club rooms.

GOOD WORKS ABUNDANT

"The purpose and aims of the American Legion are two-fold, service to the community, State and Nation in peace-time as well as in war, and to safeguard and promote the welfare of disabled veterans and the widows and orphans of the men who lost their lives in the service of their country.

"Down through the years the Legion tried to do its bit to promote the welfare and prosperity of Calmar. Time and space permit only a brief spotting of these activities. In 1920 and 1921 they rented the Noeckels Hall to provide a place for the Calmar High School to play basketball and for community gatherings. During the twenties, many events such as dances, box socials, home talent plays, basketball tournaments, and other events were sponsored to raise funds to carry on the various Legion activities.

"Before the advent of the Auxiliary the Legion conducted the Poppy sale. They have furnished grave markers, conducted Memorial Services, and decorated graves on Memorial Day.

"A Labor Day celebration was co-sponsored with Spillville Legion September 3, 1923.

"Farmer's Day, an annual event in Calmar, was sponsored by the Legion in 1926 and again in 1948.

"Meeting rooms were furnished for the Boy Scouts in

1926, and the Legion first sponsored this organization in 1928 and are still doing so today.

"In the early thirties the Post gave both money and food for the relief of the needy.

"During the war years the Legion confined its efforts to war activities which for the most part were carried on in cooperation with other organizations.

"At the present time the Post, in addition to the Boy Scouts, is organizing Cub Scouting, sending a boy to Boys' State each year, and will sponsor Junior baseball for the first time this year."

MILITARY FUNERALS

Military funerals of comrades who have gone to their reward are as follows: while in service, William Twedt, George Stenseth, Walter Dyrland, Elmer Bulgren, Cyril Schneberger; after service, Herman Kiel, Vic Valenta, Stephen Hruska, George Thaler, Albert Hyechek, Elmer Neumedahl, Harry Yager, Archie Bulgren, V. J. Horton; Civil War, John Jones, Christian Wolfe; Spanish-American War, John Hove.

Present officers of the Legion, who are now involved in the noble venture of Junior League baseball with forty fellows, are as follows: Francis G. Meyer, Commander; Alvin Wesemann, Vice-Commander; Robert Lovin, Adjutant; Anthony Huber, Historian; Richard Krall, Finance Officer; Edward Luzum, Service Officer; Spencer Williams, Alvin Wesemann, Otto Berge, Ed. Luzum, Lawrence Frama, and Ernest Hageman, Executive Committee.

CALMAR'S THREE OBSTACLES

Calmar's "golden era" met three distinct obstacles which paralyzed the pocketbooks of people, and from which the town did not recover until the inflationary period of World War II. They were the bank failures, the unstable land and insurance schemes, and the depression of 1929-36. (Some historians extend it to 1940.)

It must be admitted, however, that the depression following World War I was not harmful to this expanding area. One of our old timers, Louis Wangsness, hale and hearty at 82, remembers the growth of Calmar from 1903 to 1933 during which term he worked as a mail carrier. He served under postmasters, E. C. Waller, Hans Evenson, and Jacob Meyer. Mr. Wangsness feels that the panic of 1921-1922 was not detrimental to the area, although prices and wages slumped. Mr. Wangsness recalls vividly, with his keen mind, the two banks which were healthy and prosperous. **The Decorah Journal** in 1925 had this to say about Calmar's two institutions while they were still in a prosperous state.

"One of the good banks in this section of Iowa is the First State Bank, of Calmar. It was first organized as a private bank in 1900 by C. J. Weiser and O. P. Ode. In 1918 it was incorporated under its present name, with C. J. Weiser as president, O. P. Ode, vice president, and Louis A. Dessel, cashier, with a capital stock of \$25,000, surplus of \$12,500.00; deposits of \$365,000.00.

"The present officers of this institution are: A. H. Knutson, president; A. Holmes, vice president; Louis A. Dessel, cashier; W. H. Flaskerud, assistant cashier. The capital stock is \$25,000.00, surplus of \$25,000.00; and with deposits of over \$440,000.00. The board of directors are: A. H. Knutson, A. Holmes, O. A. Tennold, K. H. Boe, F. H. Campbell, H. J. Giesen, A. A. Olson and Louis A. Dessel.

"Mr. Dessel was born in Ossian, July 10, 1884. He left there to attend Campion College, staying there but one year when he accepted the position as specialty salesman for Marshall Field and Co., Chicago. He remained with this company for ten years, then going to New York, where he stayed a year and a half. He then went back to Ossian where he entered the employ of his father, who was the proprietor of an implement business staying there until 1915 when he came to Calmar to accept his present position."

The Decorah Journal goes on to tell about the Calmar Savings Bank.

"Among the substantial business enterprises of Calmar the Calmar Savings Bank occupies a prominent position. This bank was organized in 1911 by a combination of Decorah and Calmar capital. The first officers were J. C. Morris, president; Thomas M. Pierce, vice president; and S. E. Brickner, cashier.

"Mr. Morris was for many years Calmar's leading jeweler. About five years ago he retired from active business and moved to Seattle, Wash., where he now resides. Mr. Pierce owned and operated the Hotel Calmar for an extended period but he also disposed of his holdings here several years ago and made a new home in Vancouver, B. C. S. E. Brickner is now engaged in the mercantile business in Decorah. The above named officers together with E. J. Curtin and B. J. McKay constituted the first board of directors.

"In 1915 the holdings of the Decorah stockholders were purchased by Calmar citizens and since that time the bank has been a distinctively Calmar institution. The present officers are J. F. Conover, Pres., Dr. F. A. Hennessy, Vice Pres., and W. B. Miller, cashier. These men are old citizens of Calmar and are also identified with other Calmar enterprises. Mr. Conover and Mr. Miller are in active charge of the bank. The present board of directors is composed of the above named officers and Mr. J. F. Korbel, leading farmer of the

community, and Mr. T. H. Goheen, who has been successfully engaged in the practice of law in Calmar for many years.

"The Calmar Savings has a very convenient and well equipped banking house. The vault is equipped with the modern electric burglar alarm system installed by the American Bank Protection Company of Minneapolis, Minn., while the safe within is of the screw door type and manganese construction. Steel safety deposit boxes are provided for the use of patrons. Ample fire, riot, burglar and robbery insurance is carried and the officers are fully bonded for the protection of depositors."

Tragic as it may seem, both banks went out of existence during the great banking days' crises and are but a memory to many.

LAND SCHEMES FAIL

Another blow to Calmar's prosperity was the failure of certain schemes to make fabulous profits in insurance deals and the worthlessness of investments in Canadian and Louisiana lands. Thousands of dollars were lost to the Calmar economy, and there was hardly a family which did not lose some money. Many never recovered from the losses. In fact a reliable statistical financial guide (confidential report) listed only two or three concerns which had weathered the devastating effects of the misguided leaders. This was Calmar milked dry.

THE DEPRESSION

All of this, however, lent background for the depression which raged out of the money centers into the rural strongholds. Louis Wangness and many others saw it hit hardest upon a community like Calmar which was already anemic. Many people were out of work; corn was five cents a bushel, and it did not pay to raise or burn it; and hogs were sold at two fifty. It is at least illuminating that there were no bread lines, and everyone who wanted could raise and obtain food. No one went hungry.

In spite of these obstacles, however, Calmar made certain distinct gains. The water works and sewage systems were extended in 1916 and 1927 at a cost of over \$40,000. In 1928 the O'Rourke and Carlson Construction Companies paved many of the streets. New autos were flourishing; and the latest Fords, Chevies, and Plymouths could be bought for around \$500. Lights, which had been installed in 1915, were modernized. The old gas plant, which had supplied gas for the "lamplighter", was shut down. Mr. H. A. Latimer, who organized the Calmar Electric Company, generated electricity

with an internal combustion engine housed in a stuccoed tile building on the east edge of town, (then U. S. Highway 18). Interstate Power Company followed Latimer's enterprise with direct current from Galena, Illinois; improved the service; and cooperated in every way to expand facilities.

Saturday night band concerts under the direction of Fred Houdek continued to give out martial music and "The Music Goes Round and Round", and the harmony came out bringing 3.2 beer and later real foaming brew when Prohibition died. (Other band leaders were Leo Dvorak, Reuben Bills, John Thaler, Bill Coop and Don Campbell). Bootleggers more or less retired to the corner tavern trade. Bowling, small duck pins, came and went in the tottering building between Halvorson's and the Drive Inn.

OLD TIMERS LOVE TO TALK

Verna Meyer was continuing full time in her work at the grain company and carefully observed the passing events. She was intrigued by the old timers who came into the store to talk about the days gone by. Picture her as she listens to two of the patriarchs of the past, "Uncle Jake" Meyer, former postmaster and mayor, and Ole Kiel, farmer. They talked of the old country, of leaders long since laid to rest, of books, and politics. They reminisced about the Chatanquas in the old park lot which they and O. P. Ode had brought to town for the benefit of those who loved culture.

Mr. Ode had been one of the most dynamic and progressive figures in the community. All have a different opinion of Mr. Ode, but none deny that he made a successful rise from a bank messenger to its head man and that he worked for the community.

Verna often wishes she had been able to transcribe the conversations of John Kubesh, J. Sandlager, "Uncle Jake", and Ole; because they contained so much legend, myth, and here that it would make history sparkle. Verna's and Fred's family not only made a lot of history, but Verna and Fred saw it as the grandchildren of the Company's first customers continued to come into the store.

Calmar, in the heart of the depression, was cheerful in spite of empty store buildings and pauperized pocketbooks. The A. A. A. was bringing some benefits to the farmers, and prosperity was "just around the corner". Farmer's Day, an old device to get the farm families to town, was held off and on with great delights to all. This expression of thanks to the farmer and his importance has today assumed huge dimensions in the minds of all business men. The farmer is the backbone of our economic life, and we must serve him well.

LIBRARY ORGANIZED

By 1933 the Thimble Club, ever ready to stand by for Calmar, organized the library and filled a great need. In 1936 the town took over, and with a \$300 a year appropriation, keeps it going. Ruth Riekert, librarian, adds charm and graciousness to the Town Hall Library. The library board consists of the following: Mrs. J. Conover, Mrs. J. C. Iverson, Miss Florence Yager, Miss Louise Kubesh, Mrs. Clarence Keevick, Mrs. L. Condon, Mrs. I. Bjonerud.

FRANA BUILDS LARGE BOTTLING PLANT

In 1936 Frank H. Frana acquired possession of the Calmar Bottling Works; and through his careful and competent leadership, developed the largest distributorship in the area. The first endeavor in bottling was in 1898, when George Nockels and Sever Houkedahl opened up in the basement of Meyer and Company. They employed a bottler by the name of Henry Duensing of Chicago Heights, Illinois. Mr. Duensing perfected the first crown bottling machine and left Calmar to become a manufacturer of such in Chicago.

Soon Nockels became the sole owner and operated until he sold to Paul Kittelsby, who in turn resold it to Adolph Gunderson. Gunderson relocated on Main Street and later sold to Pem Bernhardt who added beer distribution.

Bernhardt's business was purchased by Frank Frana on December 6, 1936. He took immediate steps to energize the business. He found new buildings, installed valuable machinery, and took his sons into the business. These were wise moves; for today the company employs ten people, eight large trucks, and covers six counties. In the summer the entire program is accelerated. Thus was born a thriving business in depression years through the courage of a man.

BRUECKNER HAS "KNOW HOW"

In 1937 George Brueckner learned from an "in" at Des Moines about liquor stores. He applied immediately; and through his diligence, arrangements were made to appear in Des Moines before the Commission. George's old car might have made it, but ten miles outside of the Capital it ran out of gas. The "boys" pushed, "pushed" through the application in time, and "pushed" a State Store into Calmar. J. D. Beeker, one time mayor, became the first manager; and he was followed by Carl Gustav Anderson and Leo Noehl.

GUS ANDERSON OLDEST SON

Carl Gustav Anderson, oldest living native born son, will be 80 on Thanksgiving Day and still has a twinkle in his eye. He recalls the old brick yard spot and says that the building

where Sauser's Hardware is now was made from Calmar brick. He used to pick hazel nuts on the hill where the old passenger depot was located, (now Herman's Barber Shop). He loved music and played for dances year in and year out. His wife helped collect money for the bandstand. On the Fourth of July the band marched in the square. They were out of step; the reason was mud up over their ankles. When Gus was a boy, Professor Klein broke several pointers over him and others maintaining discipline. His was not a money family, but he recalls the old roller skating rink located where the park is now. At one time the roof caved in, but no one was hurt. It was run by Mr. Romberg. A railroader for many years, Mr. Anderson was a bookkeeper at the Manufacturing Company before heading the Liquor Store.

BUCHEIT MAN OF THE YEAR

One of the truly great businesses of present day Calmar was taking shape in the mind of a man who knew that hard work paid dividends. George Bucheit can see his name on the progressive Super Market and on the latest word in produce architecture; but most of all he can see himself in the hearts of the people who work with and for him. As one woman so aptly put it, "Bucheit Produce has given all of us jobs. It's not like the depression when you couldn't get work. Calmar is better because of Bucheit's."

In 1946 Bucheit was named "the man of the year" by Cargills'. Here is the narrative as written by **The Public Opinion**.

"An outstanding recognition came to George Bucheit, Calmar merchant, in January of this year when the **Cargill Merchandiser** featured a lifelike portrait of Bucheit on the cover of the January issue and paid tribute to him in a special feature article, calling him 'Cargill's Man of the Year'.

"Here is the **Cargill Merchandiser's** tribute to Calmar's Geó. Bucheit:

'Chosen Cargill's Man of the Year is George Bucheit of Calmar, Iowa, whose feed store recorded a twelve month high in feed tonnage of 2,072.26 during 1945. Feed sales jumped from a total tonnage of 699 during his first year of 1944 to an increase of 1,373.26 by the end of 1945.

'George's optimism for 1946 is not hard to understand. He expects to exceed the 1945 figure for reasons he takes pride in stating: The maintenance of two feed warehouses (90x50 and 30x60 feet) which give him ready access to his large Cargill feed supply, a first class delivery service with seven trucks making feed deliveries twice a week, the handling of a well-rounded line of poultry equipment and supplies which gives his customers more complete service. And, rather because of than in spite of his increased tonnage last year,

he has employed a retail salesman to give the farmers additional service and information about Cargill's feeding programs.

'Not to be overlooked in his year of achievement is the fact that he was the recipient of the meritorious Service Certificate awarded during the war by the U. S. Quartermaster General in recognition of outstanding performance in the supply of perishable food to the armed forces. This represents the interest devoted to the grocery and poultry processing business aside from his efforts in the feed department.

'Married and the father of three children, Bierheit reports that the older two, Floyd, 12, and Henry, Jr., 14, are already pronouncing Cargill's new "Crumbified" Chick Feed. Two and a half year old Julia now says "Crumbified" as the newest word in her vocabulary.'

DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION

Meanwhile the community continued to gain lost ground. Prestige came during the Democratic convention held here on July 1, 1942. E. P. Shaw, Judge T. H. Gilson, and J. W. Neumil were the powers behind the throne.

CALMAR LOSES COURIER

By 1941 America was plunged into a bitter struggle for survival. The editor of the Courier heeded the call, and as a result an organ of fifty years standing in the community changed hands. The Yager family expressed it as follows:

"After 50 years in the Yager family the Calmar Courier has been sold to Mr. Alfred Kolden of Waukon, who comes to us highly recommended.

"It has been a pleasure to serve the community as we have followed the ups and downs of events through all these years. We have passed through two wars and their following depressions and are now entering into the third war period. We have followed the growth of the town from a small place with few of the luxuries of life to a thriving town with every convenience.

"It is with much regret that I find it necessary to pass the Courier along into other hands but our country has sent out a call for engineers and being a Civil Engineer it was my duty to answer that call.

"We take this opportunity to thank everyone for their courtesy to us in the past, to thank our subscribers and advertisers who have been so loyal to us and express to them our earnest hope that they will be equally loyal and faithful to the new owner.

"Mr. Kolden will not be able to be here until about the 27th of July due to his present employment but Lyle Stump,

sold who has assisted in the office in the past will put out a newspaper until such time as Mr. Kolden can be here."

Unfortunately connections were missed on the transfer of the paper. Don Amundsen attempted to negotiate a deal. Finally, Mr. Amundsen moved to Ossian where his paper, **The Ossian Bee**, has been a great success. Calmar's loss has been Ossian's gain. We congratulate Ossian, not only on her centennial year, but on her vision in securing such a paper. Calmar badly needs another **Courier** to carry forth her local events to the immediate public.

NEW MEN PREDOMINATE

Before and during the war new merchants began to locate in the town. Servicing a great trade area, undeveloped and neglected, which was fast regaining her wealth, a score of new men came to town. Only six continuous businesses by the same owners have been in Calmar more than twenty years. Nearly one-half of the seventy potential business units are less than fifteen years old.

Although Calmar's wealth had been wasted before this time, she was now growing prosperous. True, the money was inflated; but it would buy tangible things. The average farm of 209 acres was valued at \$21,000, and farmers were producing as only American farmers could produce. More than 90% were out of debt. In town the houses and business places were nearly free of burden; taxes were low; and business was good.

The Calmar Booster Club has great plans for recreation and civic improvements. As this goes to press their is every hope the "dump" may be moved out of the city limits. In its place a park and tennis courts for all, will be made.

Thus it was that during the war Calmar came unto her own again. This time she will not lose her wealth. The Commercial Club, now well organized, is standing by to bring to all the message of unity, "We Can Do It Better Together."

THE HONOR ROLL

Although she was prepared to regain lost power, a glance at the Honor Roll on the side of Gamble's Store indicated that, like all American towns, Calmar was losing that which could not be evaluated in terms of money. Boys were marching to war; and some of the corn-fed, baseball loving, Iowa sharp-shooting lads would never return to the lazy, care-free streets of Calmar. The Honor Roll reads as follows, (our apologies for any name missing; the list was prepared through the Legion's able historian, Tony Huber, and Miss Balik):

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Leo Baburek | Miss Bette Haekett | Donald Mehsling |
| Clarence Barr | James Haekett | Miss Frances Meyer |
| Donald Barr | Ernest Hageman | Francis Meyer |
| Eugene Barr | Jaek Halverson | Kenneth Meyer |
| Joseph Becker | Kermut Halyverson | Carol Mineks |
| Howard Benzing | John Havel, Jr. | Cecil Mineks |
| Clarence Bina | Charles Hazelton | Ivan Mineks |
| Francis Bina | William Hazelton | |
| Manvitus Bina | Miss Marian Hennessy | Arnold Numedahl |
| William Bina | Glenn Hillesland | Vernon Numedahl |
| Norbert Boeckman | Lavern Hillesland | William Numedahl |
| Donald Bolgren | Rudoiph Holthaus | Carl Nystrom |
| **Elmer Bolgren | Severin Holthaus | Chester Overdier |
| Floyd Bolgren | Miss Estelle Huber | |
| Herbert Bradbury | Francis Huber | Harley Reisner |
| William Broderick | Joseph Huber | |
| Eugene Broihier | Linus Huber | Merl Sattler |
| George Brom | Daniel Huinker | Arthur Schissel |
| **Leo Brom | Florian Huinker | Charles Schissel |
| **Walter Brom | Paul Huinker | Greg Schissel |
| Aloysius Bruening | Irmu Humpal | Arthur Schneberger |
| Adrian Buchheit | Melvin Humpal | Donald Schneberger |
| Leonard Bullerman | Warren Hurlbut | Curtis Severson |
| Francis Cremer | Alvin Jarosh | Donald Severson |
| Francis Dolan | Paul Kafka | Robert Shevik |
| Eugene Doubek | Robert Kafka | John Shindelar |
| William Doubek | Stanley Klimesh | Miss Josephine Shindelar |
| Raymond Dowd | Robert Koepf | Milton Sjulli |
| Norbert Ehler | Joseph Korbel | Ray Staley |
| Rommalnd Elsbernd | Richard Korbel | Sidney Stenseth |
| Donald Evanson | Richard Krall | Lyle Stromsodt |
| Paul Ahlert Evanson | Donald Krysan | Hal Taylor |
| Richard Fjelstul | Miss Germaine Krysan | Nilus Tekippe |
| Lawrence Flaskeurd | John Edward Krysan | Victor Timp |
| Lyle Flaskeurd | Richard Krysan | Donald Uher |
| Russel Flaskeurd | Alvin Kubesh | Robert Uher |
| Lawrence Frama | Robert Kubesh | Addison Vick |
| Louis Frama, Jr. | Anthony Kuhn | |
| **Harold Frisbie | Kenneth Larson | Rudy Wentholt |
| Miss Francis Galligan | Willard Lawrence | Alvin Weselmann |
| Hugo Gehling | John Lovin | Roger Weselmann |
| Victor Gehling | Robert Lovin | Eddie Winn |
| Walter Gehling | Arnold Luzum | Albert Zweibohmer |
| Kenneth Gerleman | Clarence Luzum | Cyril Zweibohmer |
| **Carl Giesen | Victor Luzum | Elias Zweibohmer |
| Philip Giesen | Frank Marron, Jr. | Herman Zweibohmer |
| Chester Goodno | Raymond Martin | |
| | Rickard Martin | **Casualties |

Thus was it darkest before the dawn. Yet, men of faith who carved kingdoms out of the impossible, looked at the cross-roads in Calmar and knew that the upper road, stony and difficult, would lead to the brighter tomorrow. So the gods have known and spoken to our little town.

CHAPTER XI

Calmar at the Crossroads

At the turn of the century, sociologists were predicting the end of small towns like Calmar. They reasoned that the steady flow of population from rural to urban areas would drain dry the villages. However, they omitted several salient facts. Crowded cities would seek relief, and so small villages became relief valves. Further, an increased birthrate, a popularization of rural living by noted writers, and the decentralization of industry, all conditioned by World Wars I and II, increased the population of small towns. It is alleged that Calmar has grown from nearly 900 in 1940 to over 1,200 today. If this is so, Calmar again fits the pattern of a typical small town with growing pains.

CALMAR'S GROWTH HINDERED

Yet anyone with eyes to see, realizes that Calmar, with its natural geographical location and wealth, its industrious people, and splendid federal and state highways, should be twice the size! What is the matter? What has hindered the growth?

Frankly, the trouble lies in certain personality deformities. Without pulling any punches, the past history of the town has often been characterized by fear, scattered and haphazard planning, and jealous cliques seeking to out-do one another. Calmar has made progress in spite of bungling and fumbling which is an indication of real stuff in her character.

CANDID QUOTES ABOUT CALMAR

It is little wonder, therefore, that people have said, (that is, ones who love Calmar),

"Calmar is just an old sleepy town which has closed her eyes to golden opportunities."

"Calmar was settled a century ago by retired Indians, and they are still tired."

"Such a sterile, stifling, stinking town!"

"Every time you want to do something, someone throws a monkey wrench in it."

"Nothing to do here, but go to a show."

These indictments could be leveled at almost any community, but that does not exempt Calmarians from some deep spiritual introspection, humble confession, and a pledge to do better. All towns stand at the crossroads continually. Their choice

is not so much between good and bad as between good and best. The forward progress of Calmar is either now or never. It is truly a survival of the fittest, with those towns winning a glorious existence which are flexibly adapted to modern change.

Is there any real reason why Route 52 should come indirectly through Calmar from Ossian to Decorah, when a straight road from Ossian or Monona to Decorah would be shorter and more practical? (Look on your map.) Why keep a curve in a road just to pass a highway through a town, unless that town has something to offer?

TWENTY STERLING ASSETS

And believe me, Calmar has something to offer, but she lacks a unified, hard-hitting, plan to sell it to others. Calmar possesses twenty sterling assets, each of which is vital to a modern, growing community. They are as follows:

One, taxes are low, an advantage to home owners and industrialists;

Two, there is no parking problem;

Three, fine schools with vision and spirit;

Four, excellent churches, well attended;

Five, nearly every type of service and business is represented with room for expansion;

Six, low food costs and rents which would astound the city dweller;

Seven, excellent roads;

Eight, excellent location, two state highways, federal highway, Chicago, Milwaukee, & St. Paul Railroad facilities and terminal;

Nine, pretty trees and lawns;

Ten, healthful climate with low mortality and disease records;

Eleven, a rich heritage of seven nationalities, producing industrious people with an abundant labor supply;

Twelve, good soil and farms, well developed;

Thirteen, plenty of desirable building room for industry and houses and the potential spirit and ability to build them;

Fourteen, splendid water supply;

Fifteen, good sewerage disposal with modern plans being executed;

Sixteen, clean town government;

Seventeen, low crime record;

Eighteen, a spirited Booster Club and an aggressive Commercial Club;

Nineteen, a happy balance of farming, industry, and small town businesses contributing to prosperity;

Twenty, the will to live, grow, and progress, if shown the way.

Calmar has attained all of these assets in spite of her "penny-wise, pound-foolish" policy of closed doors to the Oliver Machine Company, John Deere, Hormel Meat Packing Company, and other relocating industries. Yet Calmar has the greatest industrial potential of any town in Northeast Iowa. Every new industry could have selected plants, free from odors, obnoxious groups, and small town dictatorships; and they would bring new families with new business and progress.

HATS OFF TO DECORAH

Here, our hats are off to our county seat, Decorah. Witness the ever progressive measure of their leadership, which practically stole the seat from Moneek and Frankville by the neat skullduggery of preventing the ballots from arriving (consult Bailey "History of Winneshiek County"). See them make sure that the early settlers were attracted by the water and the natural protection against wind and cold. Watch their brain power jealously defend the location of the county government against the Calmar threat in 1898. Observe the gradual growth of cooperation among their business men who believe in the value of a dollar and the value of true friendship. Blend all of this with a desire to serve, civic pride, and the willingness to try something new; and it is no wonder that a town, which naturally ought to exist as a small one, is the largest in the county. More power to the spiritual forces of Decorah.

TEN BASIC NEEDS

However, Calmar's cause is far from hopeless. If the following ten basic needs are melted, molded, modified, and made into the basic fiber of this community on an intelligent and flexible scale, then Calmar can choose correctly at the crossroads:

1. **The need for friendship** is fundamental. People are gregarious and need one another. Yet prejudice and hate divides into small camps and makes fellowship impossible. Let there be formed a "Friendship Committee" which sees that every new face in town and every new business is given a royal welcome. "You are never a stranger here" could serve as the motto. Friendliness pays big dividends, because people are human, like you.

11. **The need for pride** will paint our houses, clean our streets, redecorate our business places inside and out, and

make us search for progressive ways to make Calmar a cleaner, more contented community.

III. The need for recreation will take many of us away from the commercialized golf courses, tennis courts, and canned amusement centers to blend our muscles and brains with others to move the dumps, to erect a lighted softball and football field, to construct bleachers, to move the band stand into the park, to provide supervised play for the youth in the summer, and to build fireplaces and picnic tables for family use. We will "play in the game of life" for fun and not for money. A well developed park and recreation system will make your children rise up and call you blessed.

IV. The need for advertising is ever essential. Calmar has something good, so be a booster and tell it. No! Do more; be a missionary and practice while you tell. Erect signs on the edge of town to welcome people. Relocate your first settler's log cabin. Build a central bulletin board to post all community announcements. Take all historical documents and properly preserve and display them. You are the best advertisement of Calmar. Graciously direct people to Spillville's "cLoeks", Festina's "Smallest church in the world", and Fort Atkinson's "Old Fort".

V. The need for industry is paramount to maintain balance between agriculture and manufacturing. Our farmers are among the best the world's best. Our industries are sound. However, there are many desirable manufacturing plants, without disruptive and communistic labor practices, which would welcome the opportunity to settle here. It would lower any tax burden (without crippling the new industry), provide jobs for many, and increase the farm markets. Calmar is a "natural" for industry! Choose some clean wholesome industry, and invite it in! It is sound economies and living.

VI. The need for safety is ever apparent in a growing community. Safety in our schools, homes, and plants is a good gospel. Underpasses on our main streets for our children, safety patrols, and alertness will prevent heartaches and tragic death. You will know whereof the author speaks, if you ever lose that beautiful, blond, blue-eyed child.

VII. The need for adult education is essential, because all juvenile wrong-doing can be predicated on adult delinquency. Farm groups and women's clubs do a fine work. The field needs to be broadened until every adult knows that learning does not stop when he leaves high school.

VIII. The need for a liberal social vision which will see all groups fairly treated and protected is great. Perhaps there is a need for a small hospital. Let's cooperate with our doctors

and see what can be done. Perhaps there is a need for a new gym, or a fieldhouse. Here again, let's be progressive and share the problems of the Board of Education. Perhaps there is a desire to honor fittingly our veterans. Let's cooperate with the town fathers and build a fitting war memorial, a new town hall, embracing a fine library and recreation room for the youth. Perhaps the Commercial Club is just beginning to realize how successful they are. Now maybe the time has come to grow stronger through unity, courage, and the will to dare greater things. "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

IX. The need for long range planning would greatly help us to see where we are going. Charting every area of public welfare is not easy. It is not socialism or communism. If we are careful to measure our vitamins and calories for health reasons, why not measure our town so we can keep it healthy socially? Every American battle won in World War II was the result of almost incredible planning. Our fight against ignorance, prejudice, disease, punitive taxation, poor roads, and improper recreation can never be won by the attitude of "let George do it".

X. The need for housing, while listed last, is the most practical and paramount challenge to Calmar. Conservatively, there are more than a hundred families ready and willing to live here, if there were room. The fault is ours. We are afraid to build. We wait for prices to come down. Well, who is going to accept the "great cut"—labor, industry, or the farmer? Does it not seem reasonable that high prices are here to stay for awhile? We can equivocate until industry and people wash their hands of us. The facts are that we have the merchants with the material to build, who are only too glad to cooperate with us. We have some good carpenters. We possess, in the person of our Booster Club president, William Bastian, the "know how" and willingness to set up a structure, whereby credit, materials, and labor can be correlated into houses. If every business man and friend of Calmar would lend (not give) fifty or a hundred dollars to such a purpose, house after house could be built! Sold on reasonable terms or through the P.H.A., the money would be available for other houses. Any practical idea or ideas can be combined to reach the goal. The time to stop talking is now, so our feet can catch up with our tongues. More housing is an emergency. Recall this to mind, "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." Calmar business men know how to do good, then they must do it now. If you can build a house this summer for your family, and thus release a living unit for someone else, do it. If you want to do good, get organized;

and houses will materialize. Live the "high class selfishness" we ought to abide by, remembering that a new house means a new family with new backs to carry taxes, new mouths to eat groceries, and new shoulders to carry coats. And likewise the new people are privileged to live in a growing, progressive town.

Of course, there will be those who, upon reading this, will "say nothing"; others will "know nothing"; some will say, "It can't be done"; others will say, "Let's do it," and do nothing; and those who know that "If we do not fight for Calmar like a man, let us weep for our lost cause like a woman."

Calmar is at the crossroads. You can help decide her destiny! If this is preaching, moralizing, or challenging, then make the most of it. Darkness is an illusion. The dawn of a determined Calmar can dispel it. We do well now to light our Calmar candles and stop cursing the darkness.



The City Pump House



Looking Southwest across the Square

CHAPTER XII

The Men of Goodwill

Appreciation for the other fellow's problems, his feelings, and his way of business is often a lost American art. This book and many of the good things in Calmar would be nonexistent without the business and professional men who total nearly seventy strong and who have underwritten the basic cost of the volume.

If a greater Calmar is to come, it will start in this group, when they are deeply stirred and sensitive to the needs of the town and cooperate as they have in this venture.

In a private survey made by the author the following facts have come to light:

One, total salaries and wages paid each week by the businessmen exceed \$17,000. (This does not include private net profits from business investments, etc., which conservatively would reach another \$12-15,000 per week.)

Two, in answer to the question, "What do you think of Calmar?", the following quotations sum up a very healthy respect: "the hub of the universe", "one of the best little towns in the Middle West", "the town of opportunity", "a town where people say, 'Hello'". There was not one derogatory statement, although one said, "Sometimes I wouldn't give a dime for the whole town, and then again things will go along very fine. I honestly think that this year Calmar will make a big jump on its road of 'getting along together'."

Three, in an answer to the question "What is Calmar's greatest need?", there were four distinct recurring themes, 1) development of Calmar's potential through cooperation of all business men, 2) a program to build houses, houses, houses, 3) community recreation, especially for young people, 4) healthy, clean, small factories to capitalize on the finest industrial location in Northeast Iowa.

Once again the Calmarites can see that progress depends on how well they practice the knowledge they possess. There is sufficient money, intelligence, initiative, and ambition to diffuse the good will of the businessmen throughout the community. Now pour over the "case histories" of these men and appreciate what they go through to serve you.

J. F. Anderson Lumber Co. was founded in 1887 with the present building being constructed in 1945. "Sell with Service" is the theme, while they specialize in the following: lumber,

cement, coal, builder's hardware, paint, wire, and fence. For the past six years the yard has been ably managed by John Hodina who works with his men on their level. John has three full time employees under him.

To his foresightedness goes the credit for Calmar's sufficient supply of coal during the worst coal strike in the land. This was a real service!

I. B. Bjonerud Dry Goods Store, founded in July, 1933, by Idor Bjonerud has the distinction of being housed in one of the oldest buildings in town. The Anderson-Landin Block was built in 1872. (see picture) Bjonerud specializes in dry goods and men's furnishings. For seventeen years he has served his public and is truly Calmar minded. Mr. Bjonerud was born in the township, (his ancestry goes back to the first settler), and has lived 23 years in Calmar.

George Brueckner Drug and Jewelry Store is prominently located in the theatre building. George's predecessor in 1937 was the Schroeder Drug Store. "On the Square" in Calmar is the motto backed by an excellent reputation. George came to Calmar against the advice of sound finance experts; and with determination, courage, and hard work has catapulted his original \$57.00 into a thriving business venture. George believes in Calmar, and Calmar believes in George and his drugs. The store, modern and simple, carries drugs, jewelry, sundries, ice cream and flocks of neighborhood kids around "the town fountain". In addition George also has the popular "Drive Inn" which is now two years old.

Bucheit Produce is an amazingly modern building built in 1946 and is the shadow of a successful man whose hard work has brought him to the top. George Bucheit started his business of buying eggs, poultry, and turkeys in 1935. Today he employs 102 workers in processing poultry and eggs, selling Nutrena and allied feeds, and Salsbury medicines. He is known as "George" to all his people and although a great horse rider, he has time to speak to all. His firm last year paid over \$1,700,000 to farmers for poultry and eggs and for all concerned paid out nearly two million dollars. In 1949 over 2½ million pounds of turkeys were processed. Bucheit Produce is a strong contributor to the New York market. Calmar is proud of this unique plant.

Bucheit Super Valu grocery and meat market is one of the most advanced stores of its type in this section and was the first in the county to use modern freezing display units. "Every day Low Prices" with great turnover is George Bucheit's answer to the problems of modern merchandising. George took over in March, 1927, and slowly revolutionized the building and the business. Previously a harness shop,

it is now a modern supermarket. Everything from groceries, fresh fruits and vegetables, frozen foods and meat, to sea foods are handled here. Irma Slepiska is the competent buyer. Through 23 years George has acquired an intimate knowledge of nearly every farm family in the area. He believes "Our farmers are the finest in the world."

Bud Ean's Tavern was founded by Norbert J. Ean on Oct. 1, 1945, in a building erected in 1874. Albert Frana preceded Mr. Ean. Mrs. Ean, formerly Loretta Frana of the Opera House family, has formulated a grand slogan, "Do the best we can and as pleasantly as we can." Both have family roots going back into Calmar and Ossian soil. They render the following goods and services: beer, cigarettes, cigars, tobaccos, pipes, lighters, candy, peanuts, popcorn, and pop, and offer complete pool tables for recreation. Ean's Tavern always offers a warm welcome.

Calmar Bottling Works, owned and operated by Frank H. Frana and Sons, was founded in 1936 by the vision and determination of Frank. He succeeded Pem Bernhardt. In the manufacture and distribution of beer, Frank employs 10 people. His aim is "quality -- the best". Although the business before Frank Frana had been a good one, it never reached the huge proportions until Mr. Frana took it over, revised and installed new machinery. Today it covers six counties and is still growing. Edward and Lawrence assist their father. All are rightfully proud of the progress made.

Calmar Creamery Co., which manufactures "Calmar Brand Butter", was founded May 22, 1909, with a modern plant erected in 1934. Henry Fjelstul was the buttermaker for 23 years and was followed by the well liked Maynard Fjelstul, manager and buttermaker. They live up to their motto, "A progressive creamery in a progressive community". Last year it returned \$374,536.00 to the farmers in the Calmar trade area. No wonder it has grown from 100 patrons to 270. The manufacture of their butter under sanitary conditions has produced a product of delicacy and delight. Congratulations to a grand working organization.

Calmar's Dry Cleaners, founded Dec. 17, 1949, by Mr. and Mrs. Eugene R. Lee, specializes in everything that has to be dry cleaned such as suits, dresses, overcoats, and jackets, etc. Born in Decorah, the Lees saw an opportunity to render a community service in Calmar. True to their motto, "We Aim To Satisfy", the Lees greet their customers with friendliness and quality service. Calmar's Dry Cleaners are filling a big need in the town and help to round out the business advantages Calmar has to offer to all.

Calmar Hotel, an amazingly fine institution with a record for "Good Beds, Good Eats", is owned by a very pleasant couple, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Scovill. The business was started in 1913 and the present building erected in 1918. The Scovills have been here since October 1948 and consider Calmar a good place to live. The author spent a month in the hotel and received most gracious and hospitable consideration. There is rich history here, if only the walls could talk. It is the only place of its type in many miles which is open twenty-four hours a day.

Calmar Insurance Agency, owned by the friendly Wm. "Bill" M. Landa, was founded in Protivin, June 20, 1942, and moved to Calmar February 1, 1946. He purchased the Nellie Giesen Fire business which was owned by Henry Giesen. This was probably the largest insurance agency in Calmar. Bill's motto is a good one, "The time to insure is now. It is later than you think." His agency specializes in life, auto, accident, health and hospitalization, fire and general liability. From personal experience it can be said that Bill really gives service to policy owners when claims are in the mills. To show the extent of his service and good will read his quotation. "I called on a young man at 2:00 P. M. on January 9, 1950, whose policy lapsed for non-payment on Christmas Day. He applied for re-instatement and paid a quarterly premium. That evening at 8:30 in an auto accident his leg was broken. His claim was approved, and he is receiving total disability benefits and will for 30 months should his disability last that long." Nice going, Bill.

Calmar Manufacturing Co. with Carl Meyer and his two sons, Don and Ken, as owners, was organized in 1893. Originally it was owned by 90 stock holders with G. W. Geisen as president and Carl Meyer as bookkeeper. In 1940 the corporation and the father-sons partnership was set up. Carl Meyer is the oldest active millwork executive in the middlewest with 57 years of continuous service. At one time he had a plant in Mason City, but this was destroyed by fire. The building has been expanded again and again until the present standard of several large buildings has been reached. The firm manufactures doors, windows, frames, mouldings, kitchen cupboards, and trim-a-seal aluminum combination storm sash and screens. It employs 32 workers who are proud of their ideal "Meyer's Tru-Built Millwork".

Calmar Oil Company was organized in July 1940 as a Common Law Trust with the following members: J. Koch, T. H. Goheen, G. Becker, and J. W. Neuzil. This trust entered into an agreement with the Pure Oil Co. of Madison, Wisconsin,

to handle their products as a bulk dealer. Hence the bulk station and the service station was built in east Calmar. The interests of all were transferred to Greg Becker since July 1, 1947. Upon the death of Mr. Becker in Feb. 1948, Harry Shipton purchased the company and has operated the same since April 1, 1948. Harry is a great favorite in Calmar. His "Louis" Humpal, employee, is considered by a host of friends as a fine fixture. "Be Sure With Pure."

Calmar Super Service, "Service Is Our Business", is owned and operated by C. F. "Cel" Klimesh, who started his well-known enterprise in 1935. "Cel" comes from an "automotive" family which dates back to 1913 in Spillville, where his father, Robert A. Klimesh, opened one of the first garages. Out of six boys, five of them have been for years in some phase of the auto industry. "Cel's" specializes in Cities Service Gas, Trojand Valvoline Oil, U. S. Tires and Batteries, and starter, generator, fuel pump, and ignition maintenance. Congratulations to an "autominded" family.

Calmar Theatre existed originally as the Frana Opera House during opera and vaudeville days. It was then the latest word. John B. LaDue, Jr. purchased the Theatre in 1945 and called it "Calmar" instead of "Olympic". Mr. LaDue's genius expanded the field, improved the plant, and offered all film products. Mr. LaDue sold to Dr. and Mrs. John C. Eichorn. Dr. Eichorn's entry into dramatics returned the theatre to its middleages concept when the church and the theatre were one. Today as "Iowa's Unique Small Town Theatre" Calmar draws from 3,000 town people, plus 3,000 farmers and reaches over 10,000 through calendars placed in the homes of 3,500 families. "First with the Best" is the hard hitting realism of the theatre as it plays annually 200 features and 250 shorts.

Calmar Wagon Company is owned by three very fine brothers; Roy O., P. N., and Otto A. Berge. They specialize in the manufacturing of truck platforms, grain and stock bodies, all types of farm wagon boxes, and general repairing and construction. It is well known in Calmar that these products are used throughout the country with such a precedent going back to the old Miller Wagon Company founded in 1868. Today 10 men are employed in a building which covers several acres. Calmar is fortunate to have the Berge brothers whose expert craftsmanship not only advertises Calmar but will help to build new houses in our community.

Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad Company was built into Calmar in 1865. Its unique history has been told in Chapter IV of this book. This railroad is also celebrating its centennial and has issued an interesting booklet

entitled "Four Generations On The Line". They originated in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The Road has 34 employees in Calmar and the financial compensation amounts to more than \$18,000 plus considerable taxes. This company has been a great blessing to Calmar. Mayor E. J. Hackett has been their efficient agent since 1929. O. H. Olson preceded him.

Dotzenrod and Teetshorn Plumbing and Heating Company is owned and operated by Elwyn Dotzenrod and Roy Teetshorn who bought out the estate of the late Louis Schmid. They handle plumbing fixtures, heating equipment, farm systems, and repairs of all kinds. The main part of their building was moved from Conover and a new addition built in 1944. They are interested in doing their best for the people of Calmar in appreciation for the fine cooperation they have received since coming to Calmar.

Ehler's Garage is owned and operated by Norbert J. Ehler who constructed his new building in 1948. Mr. Ehler specializes in the following: Goodyear tires, DeLo batteries, gas and oil, general repairs, acetylene and electric welding. And to round out his busy and successful enterprise he is the dealer for the Massey Harris machine line. Mr. Ehler was born two miles south of Calmar and strongly believes in the future progress of the town. If all follow his optimism the future is secure.

Faldet Appliance Store was founded on Feb. 1, 1946, by Dervin B. Faldet, (Derv) and Arnold M. Faldet (Arnie). "It pleases us to please you" is their aim, and Derv and Arnie really accomplish it. Arnie had 7 years experience in his work while in Desorak and spent five years with the Navy repair base. "Lt. Derv" got his mechanistic ability from piloting B-47's. They handle the following complete lines: Rapit Thermo bottle gas; Norge refrigerators, freezers, milk-coolers, gas and electric stoves, water heaters; Colderator freezers and refrigerators; Amana freezers and refrigerators; Magic Chef gas ranges; Moen gas and combination stoves; Fairbank's Morse products; Colman oil and water heaters; Lenglyvaxum cleaners; and No Enamel paint.

Philip French is an important name in Calmar. It stands for furniture and funerals and both are indispensable. His establishment is owned as a partnership with his wife Caroline. They bought the Koch building in November 1944 and completely remodeled and redecorated it so they could move in during January 1945. The furniture store dealers excellent wares in the form of furniture, linoleum, paint, and appliances. The interior of the store is beautiful and well arranged. Mrs. Clara Becker and Louis Phillips, employees, symbolize the

friendliness of Phil French with their courteous and genuine service.

The French Funeral Home was established by Mr. and Mrs. Philip French in April, 1938. On October 1, 1941, the funeral business was moved into the French residence, thus giving Calmar its first funeral home. It is and always has been the aim of this friendly couple to give help and comfort in time of sorrow. Last year a new National hearse was purchased and this year a new eight passenger DeSoto. Mrs. French does the ambulance work and cooperates in every way to bring dignity into their service.

The Friendly Tavern, located in the old Anderson-Landin Block, is operated by the genial Mr. and Mrs. Roger Aldrich who moved to Calmar six months ago. The tavern maintain poolroom and recreation facilities along with ice cream and beer. Their aim is to operate a clean, friendly tavern and to support Calmar in every way possible. Guy Hathaway is the owner of the building. As newcomers, Mr. and Mrs. Aldrich already appreciate the opportunities to be found in a small town.

The Gamble Store, "Calmar's Friendly Store", is owned and operated by the truly friendly Paul Magner who founded the business in 1947 and has spent 16 years with Gambles. Gambles is celebrating their 25th year so Paul has been with them a long time. (Incidentally there are 2300 Gamble Stores.) Gambles specializes in the sale of the following: Coronado appliances; Crest tires; Varcon batteries and auto parts; Home Guard paint and insulation, Hiawatha Bikes, and sporting goods. Mr. Magner is ever alert to good merchandizing. Recently when out of a certain product, he considerately told his customer where to obtain it. The customer told the manager of the other store, who much to his surprise found the product in his cellar. "Mr. Magner knows more about us than we do," was his happy remark.

Calmar Hatchery was founded by Mrs. Angela Huber in 1928. Wm. Fobes and son purchased the incubators and brooders from her in 1946 and erected the present buildings. In the fall of 1947 Alfred and Phylis Kurth of Ely, Iowa, bought and took possession of the hatchery. Before coming to Calmar they managed the Peet's Hatchery at Ely. The buildings have been improved so that brooding capacity is over 10,000 day old chicks. The Kurths are modernizing incubators through Mercoid Controls.

In 1950 the ever progressive Kurths added an inbreeding program through a franchise with Ames-In-Cross. Parent stock was flown in by plane, and it is a stellar feature of care given to Calmar Hatchery breeders.

"Satisfaction Thru Honesty in Dependable Service" is not only a motto, but a way of life for the Kurths, who have watched their business grow and grow. Al, Phylis, and their five employees are glad to bring the best to Calmar's poultry raisers.

Goheen and Goheen existed as a law firm in Armour, S. D., when T. H. and Nora E., husband and wife, hung out their shingle together. In 1910 they moved to Calmar and in 1928 were joined by Attorney Neuzil. In the year 1932 a great honor came to the senior member, when T. H. Goheen was elected to the office of Judge of the 13th Judicial District of Iowa. His capacity for justice on the bench for 17 years could never be questioned. A graduate of De Paul University, he is also a graduate of life, thus making him a "humanist". Mrs. Goheen, equally capable and well-liked, is no longer active in the legal profession.

Halverson Motor Company was founded in 1911 by George Halverson, who for 39 years has carried on for Calmar and offers the finest in the Chevrolet car. Mr. Halverson's predecessors were Skor and Sandager, two well known names in early Calmar. Halverson's service includes the sale of Chevrolet cars, trucks, parts and accessories and repairing all types. George Halverson can remember when new cars sold for \$450-500. Today his son, Kermit, joins him in the verdict that modern cars are the best ever made, particularly Chevrolets. Mr. Halverson is an excellent conversationalist with a young mind.

Havel Heating and Plumbing Company, owned and operated by Arnold Havel, is another one of Calmar's promising new businesses. Opened January 12, 1950, "Arnie" as his friends call him, was preceded by Addison Vick's Calmar Heating and Plumbing Shop. Born in Ft. Dodge, Iowa, Arnie has spent 30 years in Calmar and believes it to be "the best small town in the state". He was initially introduced to his work by installing the new theatre boiler, a task challenging any veteran. His business is growing.

Felix Hennessy, M. D. Kindly consult Chapter IX.

Herman's Barber Shop, which agrees with the Master Barber Association that "It Pays to Look Well", is owned and operated by Herman A. Rosendahl. Herman, who is well known in the community, opened his shop in September, 1937, underneath the Gamble Store. He followed Louis Stribley. In October, 1947, he moved to his new quarters where his trade has constantly increased. It is a pleasure to sit in Herman's chair and chat with him, knowing that his fine barbering service will produce the desired results.

The Interstate Power Company, with headquarters in Dubuque, is "owned by 10,000 stockholders whose 1,000 employees are serving 100,000 customers". This is democratic finance in operation right here in Calmar. The Company came to Calmar in 1915 and serves through this area office the following towns: Festina, Ft. Atkinson, Protivin, Ridgeway, Spillville, Alpha, St. Lucas, and Waucoma. The company has 11 employees in bringing "courteous, dependable electric service" to this region. In 1916 the old Calmar Electric Company contracted with I. P. C., and from then on service was of the highest order. Arthur J. Morris is the new manager replacing Walter Reis. Mr. Morris has a wealth of background, is a graduate of Coyne, and has been well received in the community.

Iowa Oil Co., with the home office in Dubuque, was organized in 1905. In 1929 it purchased the Tri-Star Oil Company and in 1934 built the spacious and well designed oil station. The Company are distributors for the following: Cities Service gasoline, fuel and motor oils, greases and U. S. tires. Celestine Klimesh operates the station and efficiently capitalizes on a good location. The truck with green and white emblems is a familiar sight on Calmar streets. Ross J. Lutzum, who has lived 40 years in Calmar, is the company's representative and has been with them eight years. He started on a tankwagon drawn by horses when there were no gas stations or garages, and filled tanks from five gallon cans.

Iowa State Bank, founded in 1929, occupies a prominent and strategic position in Calmar life. Its predecessor was The First State Bank. Fred J. Figge, president, has been active in Iowa banking circles for over fifty years. While the general banking services are offered, it also serves as headquarters for numerous civic enterprises ranging all the way from fund collecting to mustache promulgation. Adrian Smith, Don Severson, Dena Winger, and the rest are to be congratulated on work well done.

Kauffman D. X. Service Station was purchased by Lloyd Kauffman from the old Hawkeye Company which had built one of the first stations in Calmar. "Courtesy and Service" are a vital part of Lloyd's business and life. He specializes in D-X Lubrication Motor fuel and Firestone tires and accessories. Incidentally, Lloyd can always provide you not only with gas but a beautiful Studebaker to put it in.

Kaveny's Variety Store is owned and operated by a nice elderly couple, Mr. and Mrs. John S. Kaveny. It opened its doors on June 1, 1944, and has been serving the public with the little hard-to-get items so necessary in the household. Hardware articles are also available. Mr. and Mrs. Kaveny

are from Waukon but in six years have learned to enjoy Calmar. It is always a pleasure to talk to The Kavens. John is reverently referred to as the "Irishman", and he possesses their fine qualities.

Klimesh Motor Sales, Inc., managed by Emil and Godfrey Klimesh trace their business back to the year 1908 in Spillville under Robert Klimesh. They moved to Calmar in 1948 and that summer completed their new modern building. They specialize in the sale of Ford, Mercury cars, Ford trucks, and service all makes. "Bring Your Ford Home" and "Your Ford Dealer Since 1913" are two axioms of their splendid and healthy trade. Both brothers take a keen interest in their work and the town. They were fortunate to possess "the fashion car of 1950". Incidentally they were the first to install television, but reception has been poor.

Klotzbach Conoco Service Station, owned and operated by LeRoy Klotzbach, offers Conoco products as ones of high and enduring qualities. His predecessor was Adolph Johnson. Klotzbach, who hails from Monona, has lived in Calmar for a year and a half. He maintains two employees. The station sells Conoco gas and oil, batteries, and the latest in B. F. Goodrich tubeless tires. Klotzbach, like all the other dealers, is interested in good roads.

The Men's Shop, "The Place To Shop For Brands That Are Tops", is owned by Sampson and Hendrickson and operated by Willett Sampson. Hendrickson has a shop in Decorah also. Sampson came here Oct. 15, 1948, and is successfully merchandising Style Mart and Hyde Park suits, topeoats, and overcoats; VanHusen shirts; Wembly neckwear; Brentwood sportwear; Winthrop, Weyenberg and Wolverine shoes; Lee work clothes. Willett followed Andrew Grundeland, who for forty years sold hand tailored suits of the best quality. The Men's Shop is holding true to this tradition by selling top quality for low prices.

Meyer and Company is owned by a friendly brother-sister combination, Fred and Verna Meyer. They took over the business on Aug. 14, 1935. The business dates back to 1875 under the well known Jacob Meyer and Son, G. A. Meyer. "We appreciate your Business" is not just a motto, for Fred and Verna really live by it. They employ 4 people in their business of wholesaling and retailing flour, feed, sugar, seed, fertilizer, etc.

Of interest is a plaque on the wall stating, "This agency has represented the Phoenix Insurance Company since 1878." Today Ed Meyer still carries on faithfully. In fact Meyer & Company has been serving Calmar folks for 70 years and

many of their customers are grandsons of customers who were served by Meyer & Company fifty years ago. Fred and Verna have always lived in Calmar and "no other place can compare with it".

Meyer's Grocery is owned and operated by Francis G. Meyer. It was founded in October, 1937, and employs 5 people. Mr. Meyer sells all types of high quality groceries and buys eggs. He believes in "the best for less". Francis entered the armed forces in 1943, and during an absence of 3 years his store was ably conducted by his wife, Marion, Mrs. Gladys Hurlbut, Tony Snyder, and Walter Flaskerud. Francis, popularly known as "Sonny", has lived in Calmar during his whole lifetime. He loves it enough to call Calmar "The Biggest Small Town in Iowa" and is a staunch rooter for community progress.

Modern Beauty Shoppe, where "Your Beauty Is Our Duty", is owned and operated by Mrs. Robert O'Rourke and Pat Burke. Both are Waucoma girls who started their successful enterprise three years ago. They are well liked in Calmar, but if "handle bar mustaches" come under the category of "beauty services" O'Rourke and Burke will have trouble with some jerks.

Paul Neagle, M. D., came to fill the shoes of Dr. Boller and is doing a wonderful job. The young "boyish" appearance belies a well trained and serious mind, ever conscious of his patients' needs. Dr. Neagle's motto, indicating his subtle humor is, "Illegitimus Non Carborundum." The good doctor is married and has one son. Now kindly consult chapter IX.

J. W. Neuzil, attorney-at-law, is a member of the firm Goheen, Goheen, and Neuzil. This excellent trio was formed April 1, 1928. Mr. Neuzil has enjoyed a thriving general law practice due in no small measure to his integrity and ability to respect the "Golden Rule" and "The Supreme Law". He has lived in Calmar 24 years and has a host of friends who have appreciated his words of counsel in an hour of need. His soft voice is predicated on the authority of fact.

J. F. Pavlovec Rock Company, owned and operated by J. F. Pavlovec, was founded nearly fifteen years ago. It is a profoundly interesting operation to watch limestone crushed for farmers' use in the soil. More and more intelligent farmers realize that lime is the backbone of the farm. Without lime, crop yields are pitiful. With it, the desert blossoms like a rose. True it is, "Save The Soil and You Save All." "Joe" is keenly aware of the great responsibilities in his hands. He employs 7 men; and as more farmers appreciate Mr. Pavlovec's soil conservation program, the company will continue

to grow. "Joe" has in his mind an "invention" that will make his business more efficient. Good luck, friend.

Pearl's Beauty Shop, owned and operated by Mrs. Pearl Crabb, has existed since March 17, 1937. Pearl, although born in Decorah, is a staunch Calmarite. Always pleasant and smiling, Pearl has a host of friends and her business establishment is always full. Many a man 'on coming into the theatre has been asked, "Where is the good wife tonight?"

"Oh, she's over at Pearl's getting made up pretty."

Dr. Chester K. Peck, D.D.S., followed Dr. Sobolik in February 1946. Dr. Peck had practiced twenty years in Decorah before his sojourn in the Navy in World War II, where he served with distinction. "Fortunately upon my return I could not get office space in Decorah," is Doc's summary of how he came to Calmar. He loves Calmar and feels "the people are nice to live with". "Chet", as he's affectionately known, is a wonderful "movie fan" with a remarkable memory for stars and pictures. He has a fascinating reservoir of stories which make his patients' stay in the chair a "delight" rather than a "bore". His craftsmanship in general dentistry is beyond reproach.

Ervin A. Peterson Sales and Service is owned by Ervin Peterson who was known to be the greatest mover in Calmar. In October, 1946, he purchased the building next to Halverson, (formerly pop factory and hatchery). Later he purchased the corner lot for used cars. In 1947 Peterson bought the corner building next to Faldet's. In June 1947 he accepted the Willys franchise, (the only one in three N. E. Iowa counties). Due to such a small building Peterson purchased the garage and filling station on highway 52 from A. L. Fritch and moved there in January 1949. In 1949 he sold the corner lot to George Brueckner and the building next to it to Duane Sauser. The building next to Faldet's was leased to the Lees for the first dry cleaners in Calmar. Peterson has now moved to Decorah after selling the highway spot to Forest Bellows. Wherever Peterson moves next Calmar wishes this pleasant gentleman much success.

Phil's Cafe, owned and operated by Noble and Phil Giesen, was opened in 1932. Phil's friendly and genial personality and Noble's efficiency guaranteed an unprecedented success. Both love children, and a child in Phil's is in a double dip ice cream, super deluxe fairyland. The Giesens bought out Hattie and Ed Luzum, and for 18 years have been going strong with the phrase "Fill up at Phil's". Phil is an excellent advertisement of his trade.



Looking Southeast across the Square



Bucheit's Produce House



Schneberger's new location — more Calmar progress

Rausch Barber Shop, owned and operated by Roman J. Rausch, was founded in 1930. Mr. Rausch's predecessor was Edward Johnson. Offering complete barber service by two genial barbers and men's toilet articles makes Rausch's a well rounded shop. "It pays to look well" is a motto backed by "Romey" Rausch, for he is always well groomed. "Romey" has lived in Calmar 24 years and is a faithful citizen. His roots in this area go deeply. At the time Skotland was building his house in Calmar "Romey's" grandfather was tilling the soil in Fort Atkinson. Incidentally his colleague is probably the oldest barber in N. E. Iowa. Congratulations Edwin Peterson.

Rausch Motor Company, "We aim to take care of our own", is owned and operated by two fine men, father and son, W. J. Rausch and Neil Rausch. They are now housed in a new building of striking appearance which has just been opened to the public. Rausch's maintain a complete service and selling policy on Chrysler and Plymouth cars. These are beautiful cars and are being well received in the community. The Rauschs came from Ft. Atkinson where another garage is in the Rausch family. They opened in Calmar, because they believe it is "the coming town in the county".

The Reminder, "It pays to advertise in "The Reminder", is good advice to every Calmar merchant. Owned, operated, and issued by Curtis Severson, **The Reminder** has been an important part of Calmar economics since December 1, 1946. Mimeographed weekly on an A. B. Dick electric machine, Curt issues a sheet embracing the best in mimeo artistry. For the life blood of Calmar industry **The Reminder** is an important corpuscle, keeping potential customers informed.

Sauser's Hardware was opened on December 15, 1945, during the war by Duane and Uarda Sauser. They specialize in retail hardware; and the items, totaling several thousand, make it one of the best equipped stores in the region. "A farm supply store" is the keen aim of the enterprise. Sauser knows nearly every farmer in the Calmar area. He looks forward to expansion in the near future; and if his talents bring farm equipment, you can rate his vision, A plus. Good luck, Duane!

Schneberger Electric and Standard Service Station is owned and operated by Mr. Alex J. Schneberger, who started selling radios in the pioneer field of 1918. He was one of the first to build and repair radios. His dual enterprise is housed in a modern white structure built in Oct., 1949, where he sells electrical appliances and radios, plus all Standard Oil products. Mr. Schneberger is a progressive merchant who knows how to advertise and does plenty of it. His screen ads in the

Calmar Theatre are enjoyed by all. He is assisted in his work by his sons.

Standard Oil Bulk Tanks are owned by Standard Oil Company of Indiana, and the local supervisor is Warren Gaffney. The delivery of Standard petroleum products with Standard Service has been the aim of this concern for nearly a half a century. Mr. Gaffney drives more than 15,000 miles each year to keep all of his customers well supplied. Everytime you pass Standard Service think of the world's largest producers with Bulk Tank Service in Calmar.

Top Hat Tavern is owned and operated by Adrian Bucheit who believes in the American way of working up in his own business. Adrian was preceded by the likeable Mr. and Mrs. Paul Gruhn. "Top Hat" has a splendid railroad location and good clientel. They serve beer, cigarettes, and sandwiches. Mr. Bucheit who has just entered the business, has been given great encouragement by his host of friends. Congratulations to a man of vision who is not afraid of work.

H. Weselmann & Sons Meat Market was founded in 1891 by Henry Weselmann. The present building was constructed in 1907 and has been modernized without losing the old fashioned touch of quality meats through self slaughtering, sausage making, and meat curing. The pleasant odors and the feel of saw dust underfoot should make every Calmarite proud of such an institution. Today the business is owned and operated by Ralph and Alvin Weselmann, with the aid of 10 employees, carrying on an active retail and wholesale trade. Both have lived in Calmar all their lives and are active in civic advance.

U. S. Post Office is located in a building constructed in 1910-11. The building is owned by The Iowa State Bank. The first official post office in Calmar was in the year 1854, four years after Skotland's arrival. Mr. S. Kitchensby was the preceding postmaster to Anthony Huber. Mr. Huber is affectionately known as "Tony" and is ever ready to help his many patrons. The post office employs six people and handles all types of mail in accordance to postal laws and regulations. The little tiny boxes in the P. O. are repositories of Calmarites' dreams and destinies.

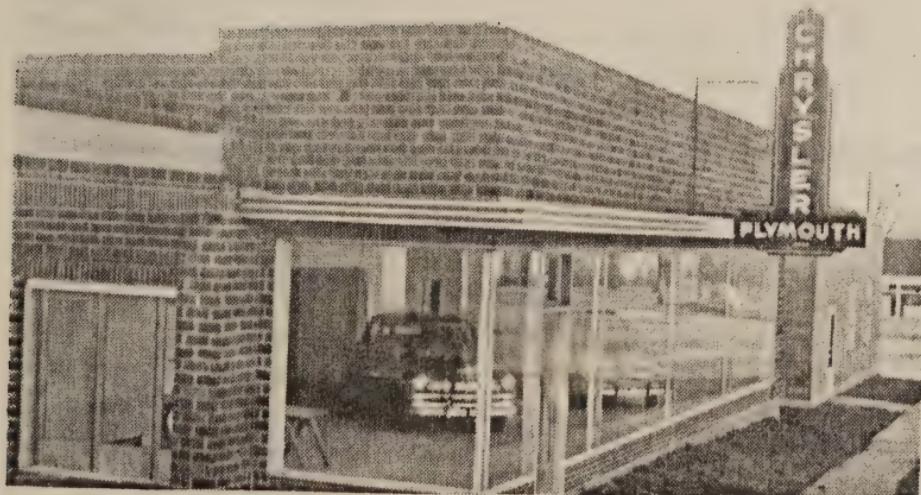
A. B. Vondersitt Welding and Machine Shop was founded in 1912 by "Tony" Vondersitt, a mechanical genius. His building, which he moved on the present site, was one of the first ones in town. Tony was preceded by the Karyatech brothers and has seen the change from shoeing horses for 15c a shoe to fixing and welding tractors. He had one of the first acetylene gas welders in the county. "Common wagon wheels and

iron wheels are fading away," says Tony, and rubber tires are fitting the place. Tony has a clever motto, "We do what the other fellow couldn't. We weld everything but a broken heart." Knowing Tony as we do, with his mechanical wizardry, he might even accomplish this. The R. R. and the theatre (and many others) operate because he really fixes the impossible.

Wenthold Tavern, owned and operated by Rudolph L. "Rudy" Wenthold, occupies a prominent place in the lives of many farmers and townsmen who search for "Refreshments and Recreation". "Rudy" offers beer, cigarettes, cigars, candies, and pool. A new-comer to the field, Rudy bought out the interest of Louis Meyer who for years operated the tavern. Rudy has a lot of friends who wish him well on his first birthday in his successful enterprise on July 1, 1950. Congrats, Rudy! Mrs. Wenthold assists quite capably.

Jake Hycek's Grocery specializes in quality groceries. It is a little store crammed full with good things. Jake is a most pleasant personality who possesses the supreme gift of making all his customers feel important. The children flock around Jake, and not just for his candy. Children love his friendliness and kindness.

IN CALMAR
"We Can Do It Better -- Together"



Rausch's Garage marking Calmar progress

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- Luther College Library
- Notes of Samuel Calvin
- B. Shimely, Botanist
- Scrapbook of Mrs. J. Conover
- S. Reque—History of Winneshiek County

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NOTE TO READER: page 4 in this book has been left blank for your convenience. Use it for any additions, suggestions or corrections. Thank you.

The Author

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